

# Bitter Sweet

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Vol. Seven, No. Eight

August, 1984



The Loon, Photo by Skip Churchill

An Island Childhood  
Morgan Llywelyn, Kearsage Novelist  
Bernard Langlais, Wood Sculptor



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## BitterSweet Views

Our August issue is about intensity and dedication. There are few people who dedicate as much of themselves to their craft as Skip Churchill, the photographer whose stunning colors of nature grace our center section this month. Above, you will see Skip, of Hebron, Maine, deep into his work—immersed up to his chest in a pond to get the unusual loon view on our cover. I'm told he stayed there the better part of a day. That's one reason we can always count on Skip to look more intently at the world than other people do.

Looking and living intently is rather a common feature among the people in our August issue. Cushing sculptor Bernard Langlais and Gardiner poet Edwin Arlington Robinson took their turns of whimsy and sorrow (sweet and bitter) to describe their Maine lives.

The story of Edwin Arlington Robinson, who brought us the sad, sad poems of "Miniver Cheevy" and "Richard Cory" as well as later, more positive ones on page 32 of this issue, is a particularly welcome story. It's not because the once-famous Maine poet has been forgotten by time, as author Carol Griffiths tells us; nor is it because he was a man of failure who turned his tough life into something good. No, I am glad to feature this poet because of the person who first asked me to do a piece on Robinson. Dave Gilpatrick, one of the founders of *BitterSweet*, and a person who taught me much, remembers Maine's "lost poet." And, seven years later, I remembered this story for him. Thanks, Dave.

Connecticut writer Anne Small has sent us an article about some skilfully-cultivated gardens on Mt. Desert Island. And environmental scientist Garrett Clough shares with us the memories of the late Anna Haley McCabe, who grew up on another island—Perkins—at the mouth of the Kennebec River. Life on an island is pure and intense, lived on the edge of nature's bounty and punishment.

Then Cornish, Maine, teacher Charlene Barton shares a view of one intense lady—Ruth Glazer of Kezar Falls—who almost single-handedly created the very popular Saco River Music Festival.



Morgan Llywelyn of Kearsage, New Hampshire, is another woman who really dedicates herself to her art. The national news has been full of the story of her novel *Lion Of Ireland* and its imminent film version. By her telling of the legend of Irish king Brian Boru, Morgan has acquired a #1 fan of renown—President Ronald Reagan. Jack Barnes talked to Morgan Llywelyn for *BitterSweet* readers.

In addition: for lazy August reading, enjoy our expanded Readers' Room essays, old pickle and preserve "receipts," and a short story just for children (of all ages) by Nancy Chadbourne of East Waterford. And next month you can look forward to our third annual Young People's Writing issue. Do let us know what you think of all of this.

Nancy Marcotte



## MAINE FOLKS

### Edwin Arlington Robinson

He was our native alien,  
Villager abroad  
Who told the solemn story  
Of this New England sod.  
He worshipped our sere loneliness,  
Our brooding hearts' torment,  
Our guilts, our needs, our failures,  
The love to others lent,  
And in the end  
He suffered most,  
For he had beat retreat  
To Arthur, men at arms,  
And, yes, pyrotechnics neat.

Larry Billings  
Bryant Pond

# Ayah

## PORTLAND POETS

Your fine article about Henry W. Longfellow by my good friend Jack Barnes merits no criticism. It is well researched and masterfully composed, but I do detect an error in the titling of the photography, an error for which I am sure Jack is not responsible. The titles on the pictures of Wadsworth Farm and Longfellow Farm are transposed. I can testify to the truth of this assertion by the fact (that), as a child in this particular barn, I helped Robert Pike (a descendant of Gen. Peleg Wadsworth) to capture a pet rabbit. Also, much later, as a member of the Hiram Fire Department, I assisted on a fire in the kitchen chimney of the Wadsworth house... Incidentally, the automobile in the picture is sitting on the ancient Pequawket Trail of the Indians, which is said to have passed directly thru the Wadsworth yard on the way to the ocean.

I think this minor error should be considered a "growing pain" as good old *BitterSweet* seems to be getting bigger and better with every issue. Happy Days.

Raymond Cotton  
Hiram, Maine

P.S. Since my letter of a few days ago, I have become intrigued with some statements in "BitterSweet Views" for June. I well remember my second grade teacher, ca. 1911, drilling us on the proper use of *may* and *can*. She forcefully demanded their correct use, too, as I have good reason to remember! In the same vein, I would inquire if you have noticed how the writers of the t.v. advertising have eliminated the adverb. Could it be that there are no I's or y's on their typewriters?

The other point which interested me was the "hate note" which Jack Barnes received which accused him of making fun of the Maine dialect. Knowing Jack as well as I do, I am positive that he would not knowingly make fun of anyone or anything...there are several variations of the dialect. There is the accent of the Western Foothills, which is the one I grew up with. The mid-coast dialect differs in several respects, as does that which is "County" or Northern Mainespeak.

I would suggest that the Maine accent cannot be meaningfully reproduced on paper. There are no symbols on our typewriters to indicate time or stress of intonation. In musical notation, the position of the note on the



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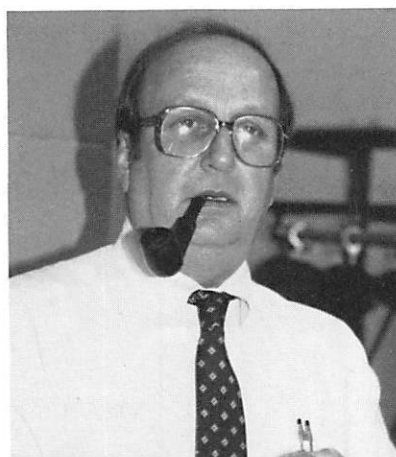
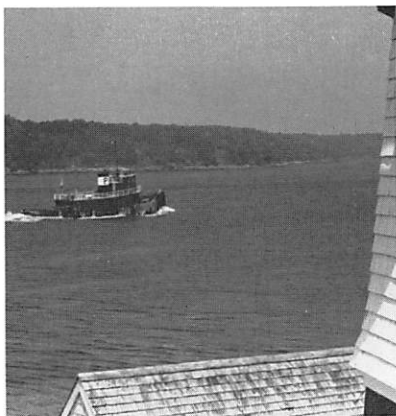
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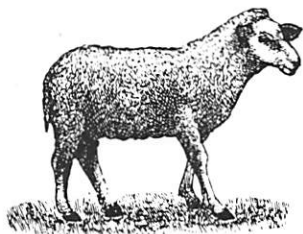
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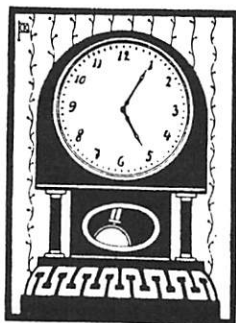


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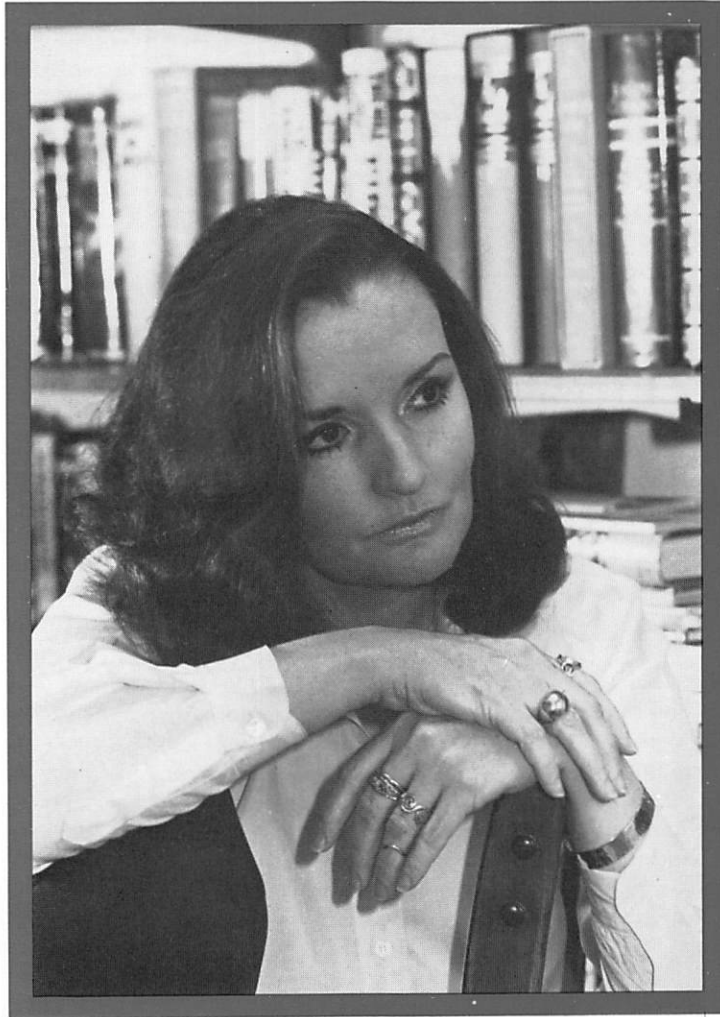
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*The Amazing Success Story of  
New Hampshire Novelist*

## MORGAN LLYWELYN

*by Jack C. Barnes*

Morgan Llywelyn resides in a spacious, lovely eighteenth-century farmhouse among the hills of Kearsage, New Hampshire. There she is rapidly becoming recognized by international literary critics and scholars of Celtic history for her well-researched and well-written historical fiction.

To achieve such accolades at a time when public demand for fiction is at a low

ebb is in itself remarkable; but how and under what circumstances this beautiful, intelligent, and sensitive woman gained instant success as a writer is a story in itself. The vicissitudes of her early life and the chain of events that caused her psychologically and spiritually to plummet downward to what she refers to as "the very pits" and, like the phoenix, literally to be reborn from the ashes are

amazing.

She was born Morgan Shannon in New York City on December 3, 1937, at a time when this country was slowly emerging from the depths of the Great Depression. Hitler and Nazi Germany were casting an ominous shadow over Europe. Her father was at that time a detective on the New York City police force, but by the time Morgan was four,





*Ceann Cora, Kearsage, N.H.*

her parents were divorced. She spent her early childhood with her mother in the home of her maternal grandparents in Dallas, Texas. The family there she describes as "very cosmopolitan." "Dallas is not cowboy in any way," she stresses.

At the age of four she developed an almost passionate affinity for horses and books. Before she ever saw the inside of a classroom, she was reading voraciously. Soon after Morgan's arrival in Dallas, her bibliophile grandfather took her by the hand into his Victorian library with floor-to-ceiling bookcases and glass doors that locked. Among other talents, the erudite gentleman was a master of child psychology.

"You see all these books?" he pointed out. "Now these are for grownups. Chil-

dren must never look at books."

Then he went around and very carefully locked each door, making very certain that her sharp little eyes took note of where he put the key, and then he left the room.

"Within six weeks I had taken down every book and was reading like crazy, and listening because my grandfather might come back and catch me!" she says. "Years later I wondered how many times he peeked around the corner and laughed at me because he made me book crazy."

Her love for horses is not so easily explained in view of her urban upbringing. No one else in the family had ever manifested the slightest interest in any form of equestrian activities.

"I had this terrible impediment,"

Morgan explains. "All I could talk about was horses; and, when I started school, I was absolutely horse mad. None of the family could figure out why."

Even as a small child, Morgan possessed a strong and determined mind; and mother and grandparents despaired of trying to cure her of her chronic case of "horse fever."

When Morgan was enrolled at the neighborhood public school, there was an immediate dilemma as to where to place her, since she was already reading on a third grade level. It was finally decided that she would be placed in the second grade, after which she skipped the third completely and ended up in the fourth grade. By the time she reached the eighth grade, with a straight-A average, her mother decided that Morgan could benefit from a more intensive education than the Dallas public school system could afford her. Although neither Morgan nor her mother was Catholic, the Ursuline Catholic convent school was selected on the basis of its rigid academic program which for Morgan included such courses as Greek and plane geometry.

Her years at Ursuline were cut short, however, by a paucity of funds and Morgan returned to the public school system. Unfortunately, Dallas did not then have a program geared to meet the challenging needs of this exceptionally gifted student.

"I was bored," laments Morgan. "I was the kind of person who is always raising her hand and wanting to ask questions. The teachers got sick of calling on me or having me argue because I had read so much and could prove my point. No one could teach me as much as I wanted to know."

All through her childhood, her passion for horses continued to intensify. At the age of thirteen, she was competing in equestrian shows in Dallas. So desperate was she to own her own horse that she went without school lunches and walked instead of riding the bus to save enough money to purchase one. By the time she was sixteen, her dream became a reality.

Morgan's ability to take a cast-off horse (she could never afford the price of a top-grade horse) and transform it

*Morgan and Atticus*



into a well-disciplined performer never ceased to mystify her family and friends. She was endowed with an innate gift that transcended countless generations—as she herself would later discover and come to comprehend.

At sixteen, she jumped her horse to a height of 7'2"—a new record for an American woman. Although her record was soon surpassed, for a brief period she was indeed our nation's best in the high jump, and she had achieved this success only after overcoming numerous major obstacles that would have defeated all but the most determined. How well she remembers the thrill of success: "I had begun breaking bones and having a wonderful time."

She also remembers the age of sixteen being a milestone in her life, for it was then that she ended her formal education.

Morgan's mother, who worked for the government, was suddenly transferred to Denver. Morgan did not want to leave Dallas because of her horse, and she was thoroughly bored with public education.

"I was a stubborn and headstrong kid, and my mother had the kind of wisdom one can only appreciate in retrospect."

"All right," said her mother. "You don't have to come with me. Stay here, take care of yourself, and see what it is like."

"I dropped out of school, still making a straight 'A' average."

Faced with the responsibility of supporting both herself and her horse, she took a job as a floor model in a leading department store in Dallas. She soon took a second job as a dancing teacher at the local Arthur Murray Studio.

However, the expenses incurred from maintaining a show horse and taking lessons forced her to search through the job opportunity section of the local papers for a better paying job. One question was forever there to haunt her. Just how far could a young high school dropout advance up the ladder? Was she hopelessly caught in a rut? For most young girls her age—yes; but for Morgan—no. She was highly motivated and possessed the discipline necessary for educating one's self—something her grandfather had bestowed upon her



*Morgan Llywelyn in her study*

when she was but a little girl.

An opening for a legal secretary caught her eye. This would be a real challenge, since she neither typed nor took shorthand. Anyone else with less determination would have taken one wistful glance at the beckoning advertisement and promptly looked for something more attainable. Not Morgan; she would do whatever she had to in order to acquire the necessary skills.

"I rented a typewriter; I could afford it only for three days," she relates. "I stayed out of work on Friday, lived on 'No-Doze,' didn't go to bed, and spent the three days typing the Dallas phone book."

In three days she had indeed mastered the typewriter, and on Tuesday she applied for the position, was hired immediately,

and spent the next two-and-a-half years as a legal secretary—a phenomenal accomplishment for one who quit high school at sixteen.

Then one day, tragedy struck suddenly and brutally. Two boys walked up to her beautiful big black mare (nine months in foal) and shot her in the head with a 22-caliber rifle. Everything Morgan had worked and dreamed for, including a portion of herself, lay in a pool of blood in the pasture. Such wanton destruction was beyond her comprehension. Grief-stricken and feeling terribly alone in the world, she had to escape the nightmare of death; Morgan boarded a bus and joined her mother in Denver.

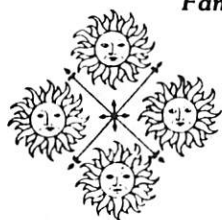
Something positive had occurred in Dallas, however, that would later prove to offset the negative—the "yang" and

*Charlie & Morgan at Ceann Cora*





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the "yin"—the cycle of life that Morgan would later come to fully comprehend and hold in such reverence. At an Arthur Murray Exhibition ball, she had met her future husband Charlie—an interceptor pilot for the Air Force who had flown in from Presque Isle, Maine.

"We kept in touch. After I moved to Denver, he flew out and we got married." This was 1957.

Despite the many years that Morgan lived in Texas, she never really adjusted to the long stretches of intense heat, which caused her to suffer with frequent headaches and other physical discomforts. Therefore, when she and Charlie were discussing marriage, the most important decision was where the couple would reside.

"I love you," she told Charlie. "I'll live with you anywhere—but not Texas."

The newlyweds settled in Evergreen, Colorado, but soon after the birth of their son Sean, Charlie went into the army and became a helicopter instructor.

"Guess where he got transferred?" Morgan asks with an expression of both pain and amusement. "Back to Texas! To Fort Worth! And I loved him so much, I went anyway."

For eight long, muggy, dusty, hot years, Morgan endured Texas and successfully competed in equestrian competition until she ultimately concluded that she had exhausted both the challenge of competition in the Southwest and herself physically.

Because of an accident incurred while jumping—she insists it was her fault—Morgan had to make two rather important adjustments in life. The first was psychological; she could have no more children. The second had to do with her equestrian career; she was through with jumping. The remainder of her riding career would be devoted to the highly disciplined equestrian art first developed in France called "dressage."

"Dressage," she explains, "is very similar to figure skating. One is given set patterns to follow on a raked sand arena and is judged not only on the accuracy of the pattern, but also on the beautiful picture the rider and the horse make. Theoretically, the rider controls all of the voluntary muscles of a one-thousand-pound horse. It is so gorgeous,

and I just love doing it!"

After Morgan had won the Texas Championship, Charlie suggested that the family move to Maryland where she could receive the best training possible.

"I wound up as the protégée of the U.S. Olympic coach Colonel Ljungquist, a Swede—a marvelous man who was one of the first at that time who had won medals in two disciplines, fencing and riding."

Morgan trained Atticus, the horse she still owns, and the two qualified for the 1976 Olympic trials. She missed making the team by five-tenths of a point!

Stunned and devastated, she saw her life—or so she thought—come shattering down in a thousand pieces about her feet like broken panes of glass. She had come so close to attaining the summit of a lofty goal, and now her career as a competitive rider was suddenly at its nadir.

"Neither Atticus nor I was getting any younger, and Charlie had sacrificed so very much so that I could carry on with my career. It is enormously expensive to try out for the Olympic team, and it takes eight years to train a horse for Olympic competition. I couldn't ask my husband and my son to go through all of that again, so I took my horse and went home to Annapolis."

It was at this point that her mother suggested she devote some time to family genealogy—the illustrious Llywelyns, once the proud rulers of Wales.

Morgan had always been an avid reader and had written a number of articles for sundry horse magazines such as *American Horsemen*, *Western Horsemen*, and *Pennsylvania Horse*. She had enjoyed writing the articles; but, of course, her thoughts had been focused totally upon her career as a rider, a career that was now at an end.

Typical of Morgan, she literally threw herself into researching and eventually came across an intriguing story in her family tree about Edyth the Saxon.

"Write it down! Write it down!" Charlie exclaimed repeatedly.

She did. The first thing she knew, she had over two hundred pages of what would become *The Wind From Hastings* in which she focuses upon Edyth of Saxony; her marriage to Llywelyn, King of

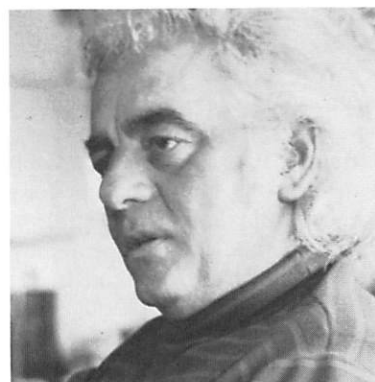
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# Wood Sculptor Bernard Langlais



## Interview with Helen Langlais

by Pat Davidson Reef



**S**itting in the living room of Helen Langlais' home in Cushing, Maine, is a true delight. In an early American farmhouse, the room was designed by the late Bernard Langlais, well known American sculptor. He lived in this house with his wife for the eleven years prior to his death in 1977.

The living room is filled with his unusual creations. Helen Langlais pointed out the raised brick fireplace, designed by him; on the mantle are his three figures of horses in wood. Green plants overflow in front of a row of small-paned windows. In the midst of the greenery stands a free-standing giraffe sculpture, four feet tall, characteristic of Bernard Langlais' work. Out through the windows, it seems you can almost see forever the Langlais sculptures on the grass and in the private sculpture yard at the back of the house.

On another wall hangs a wood relief of Bernard's favorite cat. To the right of this wood relief is a couch which Bernard constructed using round ends of reels as arms of the couch, and a chest-like coffee table which he made originally for use in their New York loft and which they brought to the Maine farmhouse when they moved.

On the floor is a 9 x 12' hooked rug designed by Bernard and hooked by a well-known craftswoman, Margaret Wilson, in 1975. All the wool was hand dyed in muted tones of beige, rust, mustard, and earth colors. The rug is clearly

a work of art, done in the old tradition of hooked rugs, with a contemporary design of four lions, one on each side of the rug. Once the centerpiece of an exhibit of hooked rugs at the Treat Gallery, Bates College in Lewiston, it received great admiration from the critics and public. One hesitates to step on the rug, but Helen Langlais insists it was made to be used and asks you warmly into the room.

Sitting at a small inlaid table, the focal point in the room, is Helen Langlais. She makes the room come alive with stories of her husband, who was a person of great warmth and sensitivity and a keen sense of humor. Like her husband, Helen was born in Maine; she in Skowhegan and he in Old Town. Helen graduated from Skowhegan High School and went on to the University of Maine at Orono where, with the help of scholarships and a work program, she obtained a Bachelors degree in Psychology in 1951. From there she went on to Ohio University in 1953. Since music had been an important part of her life since childhood, upon graduation she went directly to New York City for the purpose of studying voice, opera and lieder. After three days in New York she had found a job with which to pay the rent and, a week later, an excellent private voice teacher who was affiliated with Juilliard agreed to give her lessons on a scholarship basis.

During this time, an artist friend, Nancy Wissemann-Widrig, introduced

Helen to Bernard Langlais. The fact that both Helen and Bernard had grown up in Maine and that Helen came from Skowhegan gave the couple something in common, particularly in the metropolis of New York City.

Bernard had spent the summers of 1949, 1950, and 1951 at the prestigious Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture. It was the Skowhegan School\*, says Helen, that had the greatest influence on Bernard's life as an artist. Among other things his experience there determined that he would always be interested in fine art, not commercial art, as he had previously thought.

They began to see a great deal of each other in New York. Bernard was painting in his loft studio and working nights; Helen continued her voice lessons and

*Photo courtesy Frost Gully Gallery*





her daytime job as a secretary. Then in early 1954, Bernard received notification that he had been awarded a Fulbright Scholarship in painting. Having already spent a year in Paris at the Grand Chaumiere, he had applied for the Fulbright to go to Norway. He was particularly interested in Edvard Munch, the great Norwegian Expressionist. Most of Munch's paintings could be seen in Oslo, Norway, at that time.

So in July 1954, Bernard Langlais sailed to Norway. However, not long after, he wrote a letter suggesting to Helen that she should save some money, buy a ticket, come to Norway, and marry him. With this invitation in hand, Helen decided to study the Norwegian language through a Hunter College night course. In December 1954, she too sailed for Norway and the couple was married in early 1955 in Oslo.

Helen enrolled in a course in Norwegian at Oslo University and soon had a job with the Norwegian government—as a specialist in Human Relations for the Norwegian Armed Forces Department of Psychology. Her specific assignment was to write a paper on how to develop morale in the Norwegian armed forces.

While in Norway, Bernard painted in three studios provided by generous people who wanted him to have plenty of space in which to work. He drew and painted morning, noon, and night.

"In Norway," Helen says, "the angles of sunlight brought out unusual shades in the landscape, not often seen in America.... The northern winter sun produced many shades of pink, grey, purple, as well as black and white. In the summer, light in that part of the world seems unending." The couple would take long walks at night, Bernard with a sketch pad, always sketching and drawing. Eventually oil paintings resulted, filled with marvelous colors which Helen thinks only Norway could have brought out.

At the end of the Fulbright, before coming home to America, they traveled through Europe. They spent two months in a villa in Cadaques, a small fishing village in Spain. Some of his paintings at this time seemed cubist, which Helen believes was influenced by the Mediterranean architecture and light.

In 1956, Bernard and Helen returned to America. They lived in New York and began to spend their summers in Cushing, Maine. While renovating their summer cottage, Bernard discovered how exciting it was for him to work in wood. He became aware of the many shades of color, grains, and knots, and he made a bedroom wall using many pieces of wood fitted together like a mosaic.

Back in New York after the summer, he made another wall in his loft in the same style. The ground floor in the building in which they lived housed a lumber yard, which made it possible for him to obtain small wooden remnants without expense. When he had no more walls to make, he decided to make smaller versions which could then hang on walls. A New York Art dealer called them wood reliefs. He also made useable objects like furniture in the same way. Two examples of this are the coffee table and a round inlaid table in the Langlais living room in Cushing.

For nine years, he worked in wood, becoming very much a part of the New York art scene. His abstract style eventually gave way to figurative work. His works were shown in major museums and he had several one man shows in leading art galleries including Leo Castelli and Allen Stone.

In New York, the days were devoted to work; his at his art and hers as a secretary. Summers were always spent at their cottage in Maine.

### A Change in Lifestyle

In 1963, feeling that her life was totally adult oriented, Helen decided to become a teacher of small children. She enrolled at New York University and obtained a second masters degree in elementary education. She taught fourth grade in a public school in the Lower East Side of Manhattan for a year.

In 1966, Bernard began to do larger creations and needed more space. At that time a place in Cushing which Bernard had always liked became available—a farmhouse with 80 odd acres of land. They were able to buy it and moved immediately to Maine.

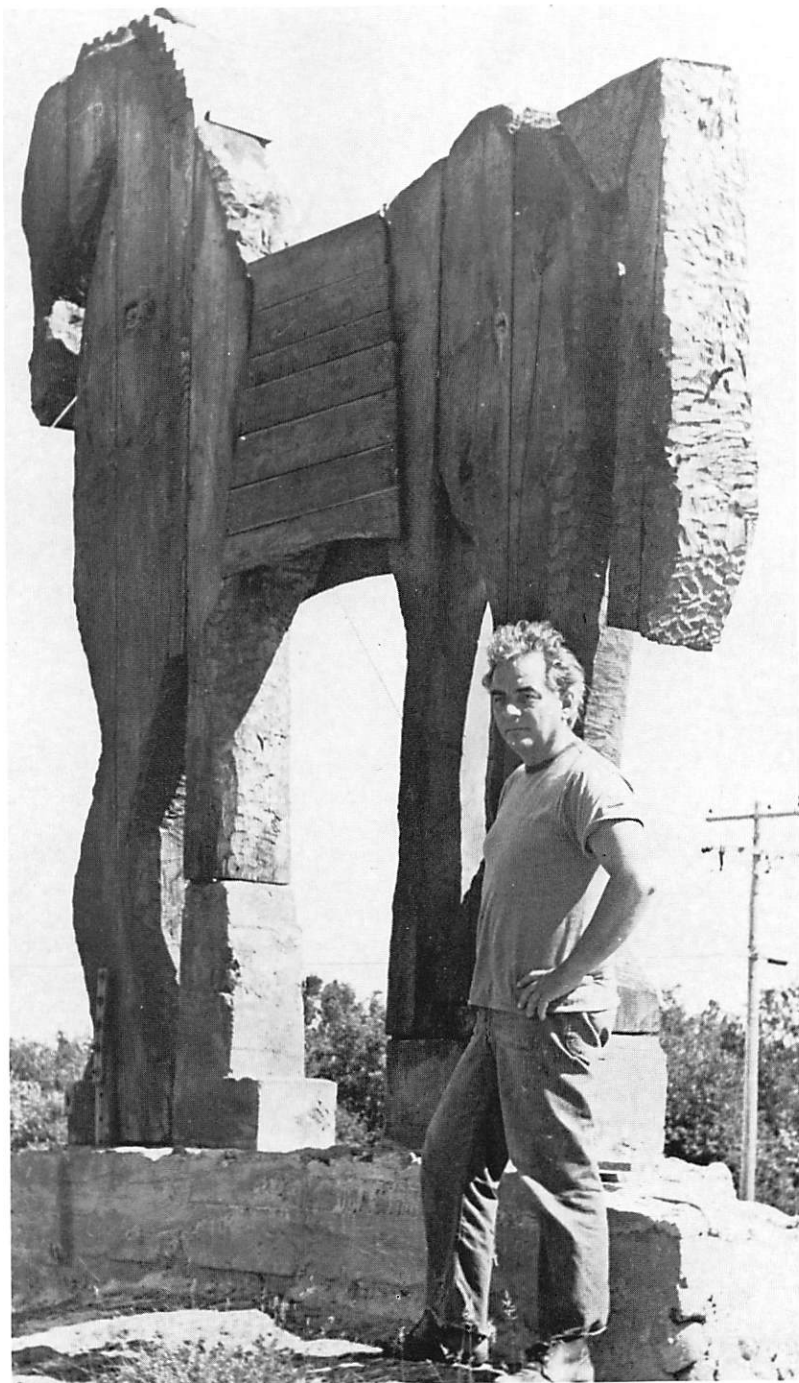
After moving to Maine, Helen began

to teach first and second grades in one room at the Cushing School, a position which she held from 1966 to 1982. The involvement with families in the rural community which she knew was to be her home for the rest of her life pleased her. "Teaching is a good way to get to know people," she says with the kind smile that seems to indicate she has many fond memories.

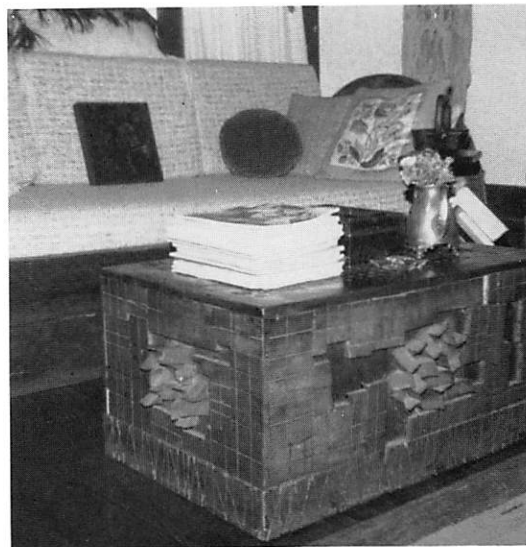
Within a year of their move to Maine, the town of Skowhegan (at the suggestion of Skowhegan School founder Bill Cummings) commissioned Bernard to do a large sculpture of an Indian. William Philbrick of Skowhegan donated some very old trees for the project, which determined the final size of the Indian: sixty-five feet. That was about twice the size the town of Skowhegan expected.

There is a humorous story about the Skowhegan Indian. Helen relates that Bernard first did a small working model of the Indian outdoors, where he preferred to work. Passersby could see the progress. One man who had noticed the Indian growing bigger and bigger, finally asked Bernard how it happened. Bernard replied, "I just go out and water it every day!" Bernard had a legendary sense of humor—he liked wry wit.

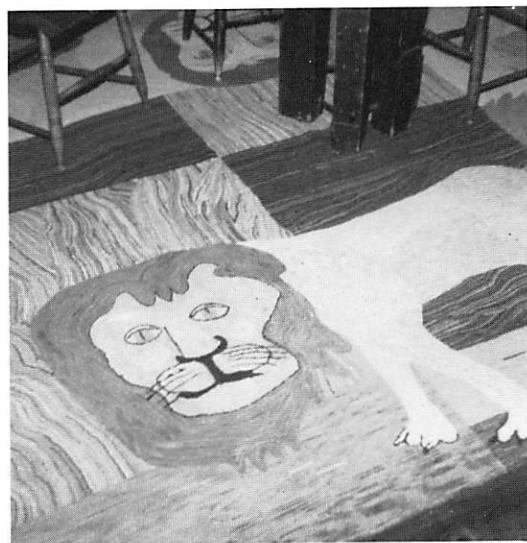
Bernard Langlais' work can be seen across the state of Maine, as the result of artist's heirs' inheritance, the first law of its kind in the United States, which enables heirs of artists to make payment of inheritance tax through art works in lieu of money if they wish. His *Rhinoceros* is placed under the pines at the University of Southern Maine at Gorham. A wood relief of gulls and a major work called, "Barnyard" are in the collection of the Colby College Museum of Art in Waterville. Three large alligators are located on the grounds of the University of Maine in Augusta. A large outside sculpture of owls can be seen at the University of Maine at Presque Isle. The sculpture of a dog is at the University of Maine at Farmington. The city of Old Town, where Bernard was born, has a large free-standing lion and a wood relief of sheep. The Museum of Art of Ogunquit owns a great bear and an amusing horse. The Farnsworth Museum in Rockland has a small elephant. Several



*Top photo: Bernard Langlais, Cushing, by Eddie Fitzpatrick, Maine Sunday Telegram*



*Above: Mosaic coffee table made by Langlais*



*View of hooked rug designed by Langlais.  
P. Reef Photos*

selections of Bernard's work are in the collection of the Portland Museum of Art.

Out of state, works by Bernard Langlais are at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York City, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Chicago Art Institute, the Chrysler Museum,

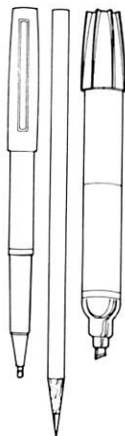
and others, as well as in private collections of well-known art collectors such as David Rockefeller, John Payson, Mildred Cummings, Ben Mildwoff, Berenice Abbott, Mrs. Walter Ford, Isabel Ault, and many others.

Since Bernard's untimely death in 1977, Helen has assumed the major

responsibility of seeing that the grounds, buildings, and sculpture on the Langlais property are maintained on a regular basis. Bernard's prolific *oeuvres* have been catalogued, including sculpture, wood reliefs, oil paintings and drawings. The art work continues to be shown in group shows and one man



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12 Texas 8:35 p.m.	13 K.C. 8:35 p.m.	14 K.C. 8:35 p.m.	15 K.C. 8:35 p.m.	16 Minnesota 7:35 p.m.	17 Minnesota 7:35 p.m.	18 Minnesota 7:15 p.m.	
19 Minnesota 7:05 p.m.	20 K.C. 7:35 p.m.	21 K.C. 7:35 p.m.	22 K.C. 7:35 p.m.	23 Cleveland 7:35 p.m.	24 Cleveland 7:35 p.m.	25 Cleveland 7:15 p.m.	
26 Cleveland 7:05 p.m.	27 Minnesota 8:35 p.m.	28 Minnesota 8:35 p.m.	29 Minnesota 8:35 p.m.	30 Minnesota 8:35 p.m.	31 Cleveland 7:05 p.m.		



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*Nixon sculpture  
Photo courtesy Frost Gully Gallery*



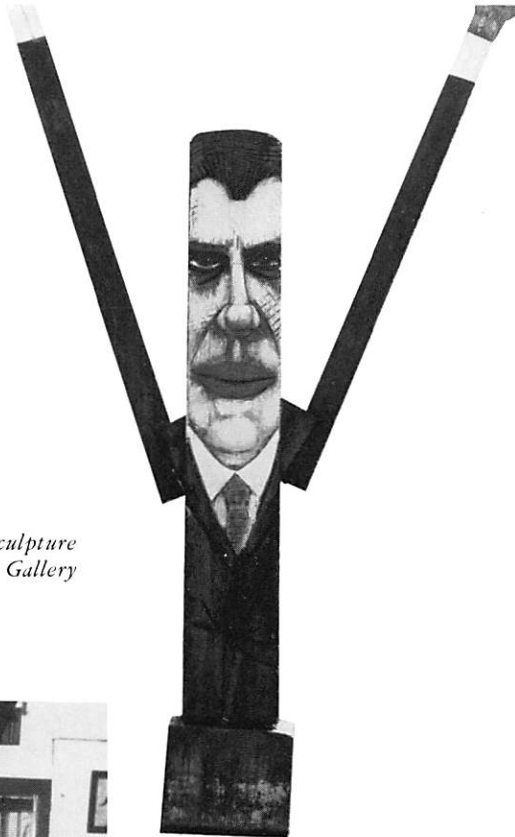
*wood reliefs in the Langlais  
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shows here in Maine and elsewhere. Bernard's papers have also been organized and put on microfilm by the Archives of American Art.

Helen has begun to put on tape her memories of Bernard, his work and their life together. She was instrumental in bringing about the passage of the tax law in Maine. In 1980, Helen took part in the making of a television film about Bernard called "Noon Exercise," produced by Harriet Passerman and directed by Russ Peotter of WCBB, Channel 10.

At present, Helen is working with Sylvie Skira, the new director of the prestigious Maine Coast Artists Gallery in Rockport on a major exhibit of Bernard's work to be held in July of 1984.

Helen sums up her life with Bernard this way, "Although some, including my family, felt I made a mistake when I married him, I never once regretted it. Life with Bernard was filled with challenges, elements of excitement, wonderful people, and most of all, fun. Bernard Langlais was the best thing that ever happened to me."



*\*Next month, Pat Davidson Reef will bring us a feature on the Skowhegan School of Art.*

## WHITE GRASS AND TIRED WORMS!

I don't know how my neighbors got the idea I am a painter; unless it was the year they saw me balancing precariously on a ladder, painting my house on the outside. That was the summer the lady selling magazines asked where I got my grass seed that grew the pretty patch of white grass in front of the porch. I told her it was a new hybrid variety and I was asked to test it. I naturally couldn't tell her I had knocked over a half-gallon pail of paint when I moved the ladder.

So, from then on, every spring when the fishing season opens and I am planning to try the brook up back—usually when I have *just* dug a batch of tempting angleworms, having had to spade up the whole backyard to find a tobacco can full—that is when the housewives (who never feel the call of the wild as I do) converge on me. They remind me that I told them last fall, last winter, last month, or last week, that I'd paint their ceiling, woodwork, bathroom, porch, or floor as soon as it was warm enough. It's always warm enough to paint inside, but the urge never comes until fishing season.

I need money, so I keep telling them: Yes, I'll come, as soon as I finish Mrs. Green's livingroom. I have to paint the ceiling, woodwork, walls, and floor. (No doubt I'll have the floor pretty well started when I get the ceiling finished, but people don't go for white floors.) After a week of hard work, I finish at Mrs. Green's—to the relief of us both—and hope Leona, whom I have promised next, won't know I got through today. Maybe I can sneak up to the brook tomorrow and start painting for her the next day. I am humming to myself as I back the car into the drive. I hope the worms are still congregated near the surface where I dumped them the day Mrs. Green called.

As I stop on the porch I notice the notebbox door is ajar. I open it and Leona has written me that she hopes I can paint Tom's room tomorrow as he is coming home on leave and she told him two years ago, before he went overseas,

that she would re-do his room with the money he gave her for that purpose but she used it for a new rug for the livingroom a year ago so now if I would paint it she could make Tom think it was done two years ago and would hint to him for money for something else and would pay me with that. She used the last sheet of notepaper and had to stop, but I got the message: It was Tom's room she wanted painted, not the livingroom rug, and I would be lucky if I got my money for the job.

Painting includes many side jobs, as I have found out to my misery. I drove twenty miles one spring to find I was to tear the plaster off a partition fourteen feet long and nine feet high so it could be torn out and two rooms made into one, which I was to paint. I found that half of an old car spring leaf makes a good weapon for this purpose, combined with a set of unladylike muscles.

On another job I had to remove ALL the old paint on the sheathed walls of a bathroom before it could be repainted. The paint remover directions read cheerfully to just paint it on, wait awhile, then wash it off with cool water, and the paint would come off easily. The paint remover DID wash off but I had to scrape, poke and pry with a putty knife for three days to get the paint off.

Painting can be disastrous—especially to me, an amateur who is always in a hurry and uses short cuts to speed up the job so as to get to another one like it. I work fast and ignore the hazards until I'm in the middle (or muddle) of one. One day two years ago, this short cut business brought me up short. I was to finish a large ceiling which I had left the night before for the Staples, who lived on a back road far from neighbors. When I arrived, I found a note saying they had gone to Portland, but I could finish the ceiling—then make two pies, if I had time. This had always been my routine for this family. They had left their breakfast dishes on a drop-leaf table with one leaf extended into the room. The butter in an uncovered dish was there, and an opened can of milk, and two half cups of coffee, and a sugar-

bowl half full. For staging, I was using a plank stretched from the top of a sewing machine on one end to the top of another table on the other, as the ceiling was nine feet from the floor. Right now this plank was parallel to the breakfast table about a foot from the extended leaf. Above the table was a huge mantle shelf holding the daughter's graduation and wedding pictures in ornate frames, also cut glass dishes and all kinds of knickknacks. I took all the articles off the shelf, put them on the table with the dishes and covered the whole with a sheet against paint spatters.

I climbed onto the plank, dipped my paint roller and reached over the table. There was a foot-wide strip of ceiling next to the wall I couldn't quite reach. I dipped my roller again and stepped onto the breakfast table beyond where the leaf hinged on, and finally found a place where I could stand without stepping in the butterdish or on Sarah's wedding picture. I could reach perfectly and it had saved me the time of moving the table. I stepped to the plank, dipped the roller, moved my left foot to the table—but this time I miscalculated and stepped on the extended leaf. The table tipped crazily toward the floor; I tried frantically to get my foot onto the plank from midair, but missed in the rapid descent, scraped my right leg from ankle to thigh on the plank as we went between and landed in a crash of broken crockery, shards of glass, spilled milk, and several unladylike epithets to fit the occasion. I gingerly crept out and arose, my right leg burning from the scrape, and looked at the damage.

After removing the sheet which had covered the table and was now on the floor fast absorbing canned milk, I cringed inwardly. The canned milk had run under the glass in the picture frames of Sarah's graduation picture and the wedding picture of Joan and Dick. The glass was broken in Tod's Army picture and his face was bathed in milk. The cut glass candy dish was broken, also a coffee cup and sugarbowl. I hastened to remove the pictures from the frames and wipe them off before cleaning up



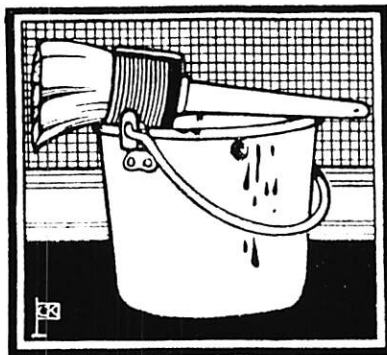
the rest of the mess. It took me an hour and my leg was throbbing and burning. I looked and it was turning a deep purple under my thigh over an area as big as my two hands. I had broken the veins in the back of my leg. Luckily the paint pan was on the plank and the paint hadn't spilled. I finished the ceiling—moving any obstacles in the way, including the breakfast table. Then I made two pies and baked them while I cleaned the roller pan and washed the unbroken dishes. Then I left a note for Mrs. Staples, explaining the accident and offering to pay for the cut glass dish and any other damage. I drove home, wondering if I had promised anyone else to work for them tomorrow.

Of course, I had, but it was for a dear neighbor and after she saw my leg, she suggested leaving early in the afternoon so I could see a doctor, as sometimes a clot formed and could be dangerous. I felt kind of tired and thought the doctor would probably tell me to take it easy for a few days and I could limp up to the brook aways and try my luck.

I drove out to see him that evening. After examining my leg and looking quite serious (I thought), he asked me how I happened to get such a bruise. I told him I fell off a table while painting a ceiling, sparing him the details of my timesaving attempt. He then asked if I went out painting often. "All the time," I remarked, waiting for him to tell me to take a few days off. But, oh no; he asked if I could come out and paint the office. It was hard to find anyone who **LIKED** to paint ceilings, he said, and he thought women were **NEATER** painters than men. Who ever heard of a **NEAT PAINTER**? I said I had already promised everyone I ever heard of that I'd paint for them, and I couldn't promise him **ANYTHING**!

He gave me some pills to take three times a day for three weeks and said to buy an elastic bandage and wear it from above the ankle to above the discoloration on my thigh—and I could work.

Why didn't the doctor tell me to take just one day off? Don't he like to go fishing? Well, Mrs. Staples drove up and said the candy dish was only cut glass, and she was glad I hadn't broken a leg, all alone there.



Last year I painted the stairs for Jean Burke. She told me to paint every other stair the first time, as she had to use them to go up to bed at night. They were gray and I painted them green so it was easy to see which ones had the fresh paint. I would have liked to watch her going up though, as she is only five feet and has legs as short as a duck's. She is very hefty, too.

I went back in two days to paint the ones I had left. When I had finished Jean came in, looked dismayed and exclaimed, "They all look the same now! How are we going to know which ones to step on tonight?" I wanted to tell her they could put a ladder up to the window, but I only do the painting. The ladder would probably break anyhow. It was *her* kid that got hold of the paint roller a year before and painted one side of my car a deep turquoise blue when I left to go to the bathroom. It didn't look good over the original red and white. It was still fresh when I discovered it, so I was able to wash it off with warm soapy water. Thank Heaven for these new paints! I hope the kid ran up the stairs and into the bedroom. She was sending him to bed all the time—for five minutes.

Some people want to use old leftover paint that has been hanging around for years. One woman insisted I paint her whole kitchen with some outside paint she had saved ten years ago. Then there was some left, she wanted me to paint the toilet in the shed (we don't all have bathrooms up here). The paint didn't dry for weeks, and they may still be running for the woods—or worse yet, stuck fast.

The trouble is, I promise so many people I'll paint for them, I forget who they are and they get mad if I start to paint for Flossie when Nellie asked me six months before she did. Then Mrs. Brown calls and says I was supposed to paint her bedroom **LAST SPRING** but it got too hot to paint in July when I got around to do it; so would I please get at it this week so it would get done **THIS YEAR**?

Just yesterday, I finished my last job (I thought) so this morning I dug worms and was pulling on my old fishing boots when Mrs. Trent's car drove in. She jumped out and came up the path in a fast dogtrot. I hastily opened the door and she ran in saying breathlessly "Oh Cora, I'm so glad I found you home. Can you come right over and paint the dining room floor? Everyone is going fishing today and it is the only chance to get it done while Ed and the kids are gone!" She ran out and down the walk, calling back that she would have everything ready when I got there.

I yanked my boots off and threw them at the cat. Then I put on my ragged paint clothes. I don't think I could find my fishpole anyway. It fell down behind the broken piano in the back end of the shed last week, when I threw it after Olga called to remind me I had told her I would paint her chairs that day. Those worms must be getting awful bewildered at being dug up and put back so often. I wonder if they would keep a few days in the refrigerator?

I **THINK** this is my last paint job.

*Cora Thurston  
Center Conway, N.H.*

## ON THE DIFFICULTIES OF BECOMING A LOCAL CHARACTER FOR THE MAINE VISITORS BUREAU

When I was mustered out of the Army in the spring of 1958, I took a job mating mice at the Jackson Laboratory in Bar Harbor. In spite of the challenges imposed by my official duties and my impressive title of Director of Intermurine Affairs, I soon tired of my daily routine and yearned for an occupation

that might afford me greater independence.

One bleak, winter afternoon as I was returning from the animal room with one of my associates, he chanced to remark that I might be lanky and tousled-haired enough to qualify as a local character in one of the Maine coastal towns and suggested that I apply to the Maine Visitors Bureau for a permit to operate in that capacity.

Not long after, I began carving clams out of driftwood and soon mastered the art to such a point that making a living at the trade seemed something more than a reckless dream. In early spring, I resigned from my position at the laboratory and devoted myself solely to my carvings. By summer, having accumulated a sufficiently large collection, not only of clams but also of oysters and mussels, to set up shop, I rented a small store in Damariscotta and hung a sign over the door inviting the way to enter "Charlie's Tourist Trap."

In the interim, I had written to the Maine Visitors Bureau in Augusta to apply for my license as a local character and tourist trapper. The Bureau at once sent an inspection team to visit my shop and to evaluate my qualifications and also issued me an interim clearance allowing me access to secret documents relating to the treatment of tourists. The members of the team inspected my store and wares, questioned me as to my motives for wanting to become a local character and gave me the Tourist Sales Simulation Test, in which they posed as tourists of varying degrees of obnoxiousness.

To my chagrin, the Maine Visitors Bureau did not approve my license. On inquiry to the Office of Licenses, I was informed that the inspection team had noted "certain deficiencies" in my "behavior and bearing sufficient to merit denial of a license as a local character and tourist trapper." As they put it in their report to the Bureau:

*Although the subject exhibited the prescribed characteristics of being lanky, clearly eccentric, tousled-haired and unbecomingly dressed in poorly fitted clothes to a sufficient degree to meet the standards*

*of the Bureau, and although he possessed the beginnings of a weather-beaten countenance, it was obvious to us that he lacked authenticity as a local character. Furthermore, although the subject was able to demonstrate Maine birth by virtue of the required legal documents, he did not speak with an authentic Maine accent, a deficiency perhaps attributable to his unfortunate experience of having lived in the alien state of California and of having associated with individuals from other states during the period of his Army enlistment. A more serious defect in the subject's character was a failure to respond on the Tourist Sales Simulation Test in a sufficiently laconic manner, there having been occasions on which he was excessively verbose, responding in profuse outpourings of as many as two sentences at a time. We attribute this failing to his having grown up in the sophisticated urban industrial complex of Lewiston-Auburn. It is thus with deep regret that we must recommend against granting a license to Mr. Ridley. Nevertheless, we believe that he may be educable and would be pleased to reconsider his application after he has undergone an appropriate regimen of training and instruction at the Northeast Academy of Tourism.*

With hope in my heart, I packed my bags and made my way to the Academy. With diligent study and a bit of luck, I was not entirely without prospects of being permitted to open my carved clam shop by the coming summer tourist season.

Liberally supported by a National Defence Local Dialects Fellowship\*, I set to work on my program of studies, which was as difficult a curriculum as I have since encountered at a number of major American universities. From my struggles during the first hour of the morning with Downeast Dialect 101 to the absorbing courses in Basic Lore of the Maine Coast, Techniques of Taciturnity, Introductory Folksiness and Introduction to the Philosophy of Maine, there was little time for rest or relaxation. My favorite course was the

Laboratory on Techniques for the Obfuscation and Manipulation of Tourists, which met Tuesday and Thursday afternoons behind closely guarded doors\*\*. Here we learned how to feign misunderstanding of a tourist's questions, how to give incorrect directions, or, at the least, incomplete directions, with an air of utter innocence and how to charm the run of the mill tourist into believing that one's wares are authentic Maine handicrafts. Another valuable course was Socioeconomic Foundations of Tourist Classification and Differentiation, in which we learned how to differentiate affluent tourists who would be good prospects for sales from the more common hordes upon whom there is no point in wasting an eloquently enunciated "Ehe" or "Yup."

In spite of my best efforts, in the end it was evident that I lacked the native abilities essential to achieving local character status. I was graduated from the Academy *pauvissima cum laude* and my faculty advisor informed me that he would not be willing to write a recommendation for me.

Having failed to qualify as a Maine character, it was with deep regret that I left my native state and emigrated to California. However, all was not lost, for the cosmopolitan California ear at once identified my Maine accent as British, and I was accorded a prestige I might not otherwise have achieved.

Charles P. Ridley  
Palo Alto, California

*\*The National Defence Local Dialects Fellowship Program was established by Congress to rectify a perceived "critical shortage" of persons capable of speaking local dialects following the discovery of a Russian agent who had been masquerading successfully as a Maine lobsterman, a feat few actual Maine natives could perform.*

*\*\*Tight security had been in force since 1955 when espionage agents working undercover for the Massachusetts Tourist Association had been apprehended attempting to infiltrate the course. Since Maine law forbids the execution of spies, these agents have been imprisoned for several years on a small penal island in Penobscot Bay.*



## STAGE COMMUNICATION

The story of the disaster at the Willey House has often been told. It happened in August of 1824. Heavy rains caused a land slide to come roaring down Mt. Willey into Crawford Notch.

Terrified by the rumble of its approach the Willey family rushed out of their house in search of safety. The slide engulfed them all: Captain Willey, his wife, five children, and two servants all perished.

Recently I was reading the 1824 diary of Daniel Small who resided in Hiram at that time. I came across this item: "Last night the White Mountains fell down and killed Capt. Willey and his family."

Last night! And twenty-four hours later Small was recording it in his diary! This was 1824—no railroad, no telegraph, no telephone, no fast moving automobiles. How did the word get over the fifty miles from Crawford's to Hiram so quickly? It intrigued me. After considering several options, I came up with the following uneducated guess.

StageCoach! At that time stage coaches were making almost daily runs from Vermont to Portland.

The operation was a speedy one for that time in history. It operated in twelve-mile stages (hence the name "stage" coach). There were stations, usually hotels with stables, at Bartlett and North Conway in New Hampshire and at Fryeburg, Hiram, Steep Falls, Gorham, and Portland in Maine. The spacing is roughly twelve miles.

Leaving a station with fresh horses, the express stage was driven to the extreme capability of the animals to the next station, where a fresh team was substituted.

The roads were not exactly super-highways; some were described as two ruts and a horse path. They crossed many brooks and streams which the drivers, in Maine at least, used as mileage markers. Hence we have the brook in Brownfield which is known as Ten Mile Brook, not because it is ten miles long but because it is roughly ten miles out of Fryeburg. The brook in Hiram known as the Red Mill Brook was then known as the Thirteen Mile Brook.

From all these considerations I decided

that their average travelling time could easily have been an hour between stations. Thus the news of the disaster could have reached Hiram in about five hours, in ample time for Daniel to record it in his diary.

Of course it must be understood that some of this is pure guesswork. But if anyone can come up with a better answer or actual historical facts, I'm a-listenin'.

*Raymond Cotton  
Hiram*

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## BOUNDARY LINES

In 1974 we purchased back lots on the north shore of Keyes Pond. Several times we walked the boundary lines noting the markers. Shortly thereafter my sister, her husband, and their four children paid us a visit and, in the course of conversation, our newly-acquired back lots were mentioned. Matter-of-factly, I asked if anyone wanted to walk the boundary lines. My sister, her youngest daughter, my mother, two of my children, and I decided to set out—but not before the usual kidding from the men: "Take a compass, enough food for several days, matches, knife, etc."

"Okay, guys, enough," was our retort. "You must think us complete novices."

Since my mother's usual attire was a dress, we convinced her to put on slacks over stockings, comfortable shoes, long-sleeved shirt, and a hat, and off we started.

It was an oppressively hot day and as we walked through the woods we took our time, chattering casually. The company was pleasant. The clearing ahead alerted me we were entering the area of an abandoned beaver pond. Bearing right, we followed the edge of the clearing and, so I thought, the right angle to follow the opposite boundary. We had traveled but a short distance when I discovered my mistake—instead of the usual underbrush, we were struggling through slash. I glanced up and saw the little signs on the trees: S.D. Warren Co.

I knew we couldn't get lost. If we continued we would eventually reach a road, but how far we'd have to walk I couldn't judge. With two small children, whose whimpering would soon erupt

into loud wails, and an aging mother, my one thought was to backtrack to the beaver pond. The perspiration was running down my temples, attracting the bugs. The angry buzzing around my head did not blot out a loud whisper from behind me, "I don't think she knows where she is . . . I believe we're lost."

Helping the howling little ones and Mom over and around the slash, we finally reached the beaver pond and the lump in my dry throat relaxed a little. I could now hear loud sighs of relief as they recognized the area.

The cool running water of the brook was comforting as we followed it. Before long we could hear the voices of the girls at Camp Tapawingo's waterfront. Bearing left and leaving the brook, the walking was easier. We climbed a small knoll and my (by this time exhausted) mother stopped to rest. Before either my sister or I could utter a warning, she had placed her hand on the small tree next to her. It was a dead birch, rotted at the base. As if the incident were being recorded in slow motion, she listed and gradually fell down the ravine, landing in a crumpled heap on the soft moss and dried leaves. Realizing only her dignity had been hurt, my sister and I convulsed with laughter as we rushed to help her. Brushing us aside, she slowly rose with a "I can get up by myself."

The little ones were furiously brushing the bugs from their tear-stained faces as we continued on our way. Through the trees we could now see the welcome outline of the cabin and the blue of the lake. As we approached, we glanced furtively around. The guys were nowhere in sight. The car was gone. They had taken the older boys to the store. Whew!

We collapsed on the sand of the beach after splashing our faces with water from the lake. My mother's stockings were in shreds. We fell into fits of giggles recalling our episode.

Yet to come was the anticipated "I told you so—you should have taken the canteen, food, etc." We have never lived down this trek through the woods. And even now when we hear "remember the time you walked the boundary lines . . ." we know the ribbing will begin again. Oh yes, we understand the consequences

of going beyond the boundaries!

Audrey Susan Mack  
Sweden, Maine

## WHERE DO OLD TENTS GO?

The art of pitching a tent has always eluded me; the excitement proclaimed by all wilderness handbooks has never penetrated my soul. But with the coming of motor homes, tag-along trailers, and the like, what has happened to all those pieces of canvas that once swayed in the breeze among the pines? Frankly, I don't know, nor would I follow if someone showed me.

I have no fond memories of tenting. I remember vividly a cold day in northern Maine, wrapped in a tarpaulin, trying to cook hot dogs on a saturated stick over a dying fire. My father stood like a pioneer, with water dripping off his nose, heralding the great outdoors. The heralding was followed by the announcement that we were to get into the old Chevy and "head for home." He gathered the gear while the tail of his coonskin hat dragged in puddles, and we left the wilderness. I vowed on the branch that whipped my face never to spend another night in a tent.

My mother tricked me. It was the middle of January somewhere in the middle of a conversation concerning seed catalogues that she dropped the bombshell.

"I think we should go tenting this summer." As any State-of-Mainer knows, one makes rash promises in the shadow of January snowdrifts. I inquired if she remembered our last outing. She replied caustically that she did, but that this would be a PLANNED trip . . . just the two of us . . . and nothing could go wrong.

I looked at this five-foot woman, all of 140 pounds, and I must admit that doubts did niggle a bit. Things were *never* meant to go wrong, but somehow things did happen. I remember once I told her to take the next right-hand turn. She missed the street but took me wheeling through a General Electric warehouse, tooting her horn at lift trucks as we motored. Once, she took the middle line of two lanes going through Augusta "because she didn't

know where she wanted to turn." Never mind the honking horns and the Greyhound Bus driver who was shaking his fist at us. Nevertheless, these were incidents during travel, and by all rights I should give her a chance.

During the next few months we poked the idea around and discussed it lightly. As tenting season grew closer, my worries began. It was well to plan something in winter, but to actually carry it out—well, that was another matter.

I didn't want to hurt her feelings, but fear won out. "Ma, do you know how to pitch a tent?" I ventured timidly.

"Will you stop worrying? I've driven across the United States, trekked an Arizona desert, been buried in clay in the San Pedro River, and you ask me if I can pitch a tent?" Her voice rose and I don't mind telling you I felt ashamed.

Finally at the risk of ruining our mother-daughter relationship, I asked if we could just have a dry run in the front yard. My father would not lift a hand. He declared women should remain in the home and leave the wilds to men. He snorted, paced, ridiculed, and pointed. The more he raved, the more determined Mother became. At this point, neighbors were slowly moving aside their curtains and staring. Some even stood in their yards and watched openly. I swear there was money changing hands with the odds that we'd never get the big green giant unrolled. We unrolled, we staked, and we pitched it . . . all in the course of an hour. I was not looking at

the sagging green canvas that was going to be my shelter for three days in the wilds of Rangeley, Maine.

Rangeley is one of the prettiest spots in the United States. This thought consoled me as Mother drove into my yard with her compact car filled to the top. I knew she was there because her glasses were shining just above the steering wheel, and a tent pole was perched dangerously close to her ear. My cousin (a nurse invited along for first-aid services) was in the passenger seat, clutching two styrofoam coolers and three boxes of band-aids. I suggested that it was rather crowded, but Mother informed me coolly that the tent belonged to her and she was not going to be left behind.

A few hours later we were looking at the site of our home for the next three days. The tent was dragged out. Again we unrolled the great green monster. Mother was in full charge. She would hold the center pole, while I straightened the sides of the tent to be staked. She disappeared under the canvas. At that particular time, I became engaged in conversation with another fellow camper and forgot my mother was holding the center pole. There was a muffled snarl, with thrashing not far behind. With the help of half of the campers in the area, we extracted Mother, who silenced me with one glare. Obviously we were the subject of pity as offers of help poured forth.

The tent was finally up. Things were going smoothly. Then we hit our first snag. The stove refused to work. We had a semblance of a fireplace consisting of a few rocks scattered about. Mother waited until the campers next door were boating and stole their fireplace!

I really gave her a dressing-down for that. Good sporting fun was one thing; thievery another. She tossed me a hot biscuit for her answer. Sun went down and we hit a second snag. The lantern wouldn't work and no one had brought a flashlight. Mother, undaunted, took the lantern and off she went, knocking on tent flaps until she found a Mr. Fix-it. It glowed until she found her way back to our tent and there it flickered and died at our feet. Even Mother did not have the nerve to go out flap-rapping again that night.

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*The author's mother, Ethel Martin*





## OLD AGE

Gramp Wiley enjoys being old. Because he's over 80 he thinks I have to consider his every word a nugget of wisdom.

Sometimes he's right on target, like the day he told me how to combat gossip. "Find out who's saying it," he said, "and then brag that you're doing it with them."

Who but Gramp Wiley could have pointed out that society people can be divided into two groups? The first group serves cashews at parties. The second group serves buttered cereal nuggets that have been warmed in the oven.

And when a group of people who were a little bit holier than the regulars split off from a local church, Gramp told me the small group would soon divide again. It actually split a couple of times after that, and when the last group to peel off only had one person in it, the neighbors all winked and said that that group was about as perfect as it could get.

But Gramp told me to keep watching, and sure enough, that person did some soul searching, acknowledged her pride, and developed schizophrenia.

Because he's old, Gramp can get away with blasphemy that wouldn't even occur to a man half his age. For example, I saw

him look at Gladys, his wife of over 60 years, and say, "I've got to give her credit—she's never once cried about not having a meaningful relationship."

Before I could catch my breath, he continued, "Back in the 20's Gladys used to wear her hair in two little buns—one over each ear. All the girls did. They quit doing it a few years later when someone noticed that it made them all look like Minnie Mouse."

I said, "I don't know anyone who enjoys being old as much as you do."

Gramp thumped his cane on the floor and said, "Being old is an art."

"You're good at it."

"I know it. But being old didn't come naturally to me. I had to work to get where I am today. Now I could write a book on how to age gracefully."

"Why don't you, Gramp? There are lots of people around here who don't know how to be old. Look at Reeny's great aunt. She's 87 and has worn out four sewing machines. And Georgie! He's 82 but he pushes a reel mower around his lawn every day. And Alva—he spends 12 hours a day in his garage and I know he's ten years older than you are."

"He's only older in years," Gramp shouted. "Alva isn't more than 70 if you

consider the way he thinks and runs around."

"What should folks in their 80's do to act their age?" I asked.

"Sitting is the best way to start. Find a nice soft chair, move it over by the front window, and just sit there. Don't get up for anything."

"You practice what you preach," I said. "Whenever anyone knocks or the phone rings, you shout for Gladys."

Gramp nodded and rubbed his stiff old knees. "Two or three years of just sitting and your joints and muscles forget how to work together. With a little concentrated effort like that you can become a regular carrot. But if I were to jump up every time the phone rings or go for little walks, I'd be as young as Georgie or Alva within a month. It would take years of just plain sitting to get back into the good old condition I'm in today."

Robert Skoglund  
© 1983

Robert Skoglund writes from his home at "The Center of The Universe," St. George, Maine. He can be heard on National Public Radio, and is available for M.C. and dinner speaking engagements.

## Who The Heck Is Robert Skoglund?

Last month, BitterSweet began a small series of humor columns by this St. George, Maine, writer—better known for his weekly jazz program on MPBN radio and for irrepressible "personal ads" in *The Maine Times* (samples: "Antique dealer wants to meet attractive young woman interested in one nightstand," "Man living in filth, poverty, ignorance and squalor wishes to meet attractive, educated, affluent young woman who seeks a mission in life.")

That was in the late 1970's. Today *The Humble Farmer* has somewhat abandoned

his humility for a letterhead which reads: "1600 Oceanside Drive, Suite 400" and a granite monolith in his front yard proclaiming little St. George "the center of the universe."

Actually, Skoglund, a Ph.D. in linguistics, bass player and "atrocious liar," is now on the white jacket circuit as master of ceremonies and after-dinner speaker. His *Fees for Humorous Talks* promise "Polite and Embarrassed Simpers" for \$125, "Chortles and Belly Laughs" for \$175, and "Convulsions in the Aisles" for \$275—with a few assorted Chuckle & Guffaw prices in between. We hope you will enjoy him.



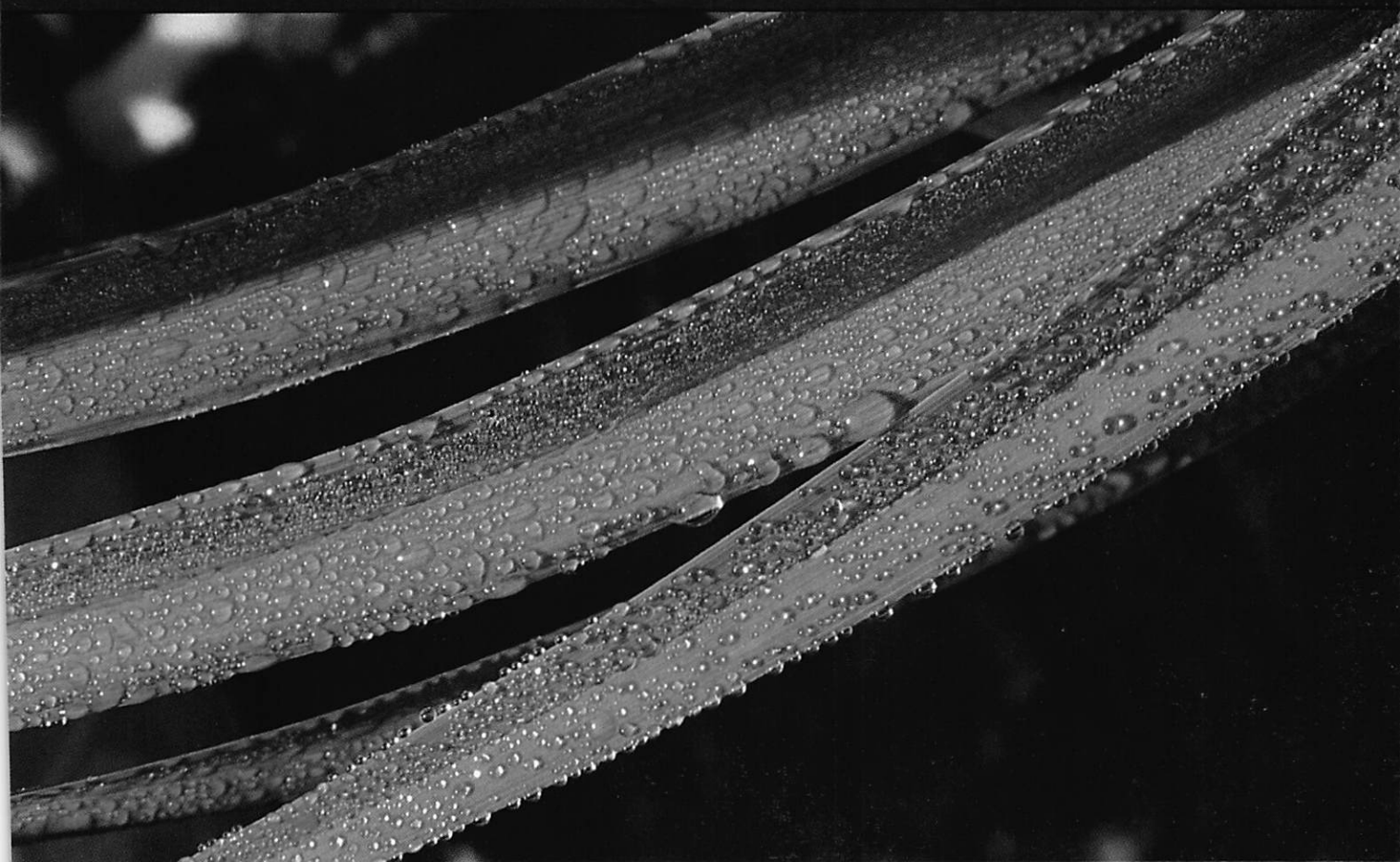
Skoglund the humorist

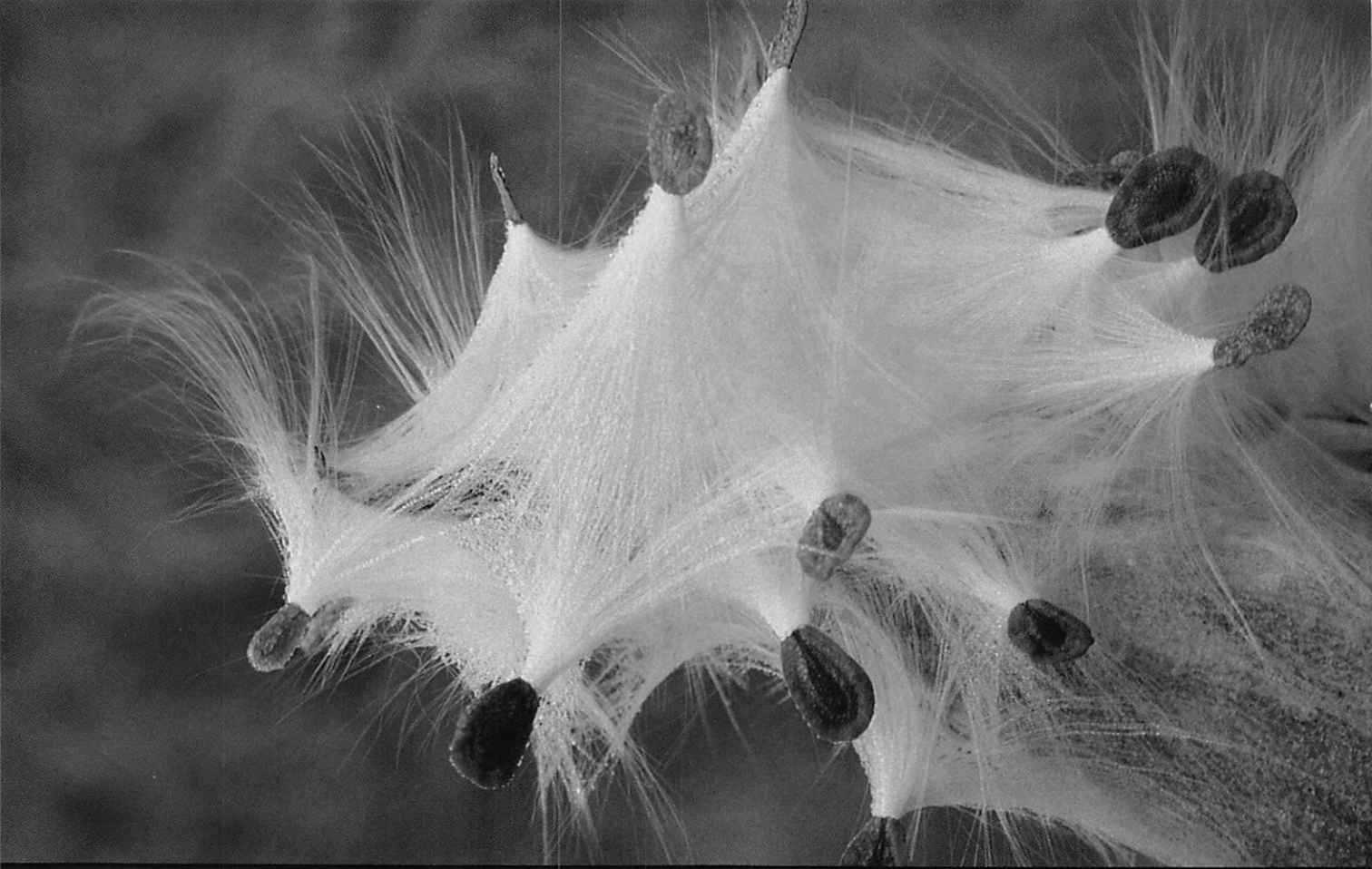


The old humble disguise



NATURE'S BEST · Photography by Skip Churchill



















*on Mt. Desert Island*

## BAR HARBOR: *by Anne Small*

Bar Harbor, Maine, known in its early days for luxury summer "cottages" of 20 or more rooms, was once named Eden. Today the shady streets are lined with restaurants, inns, boutiques and gift shops. This busy town now serves as the commercial center for thousands of annual visitors to Acadia National Park and the rest of Mt. Desert Island.

Yet just a short drive away from the summer traffic crush on Main St. there are three uniquely different gardens open to the public without charge. They range from displays of native wild flowers to formal perennial beds, and from secluded reflecting pools to vistas of the

Atlantic horizon.

Just south of town, at Sieur de Monts Spring in the national park, are the **Wild Gardens of Acadia**. Donated by the founder of the park, George B. Dorr, the area was incorporated in 1916 for "educational and scientific purposes"—thus preserving for today's visitors land which was a summer camping ground for generations of Abnaki Indians.

The Bar Harbor Garden Club undertook the formidable task of turning 3/4 of an acre into a series of plots containing over 300 varieties of native plants, trees and shrubs. Separated by winding paths, which make the area seem larger

than it really is, are sites devoted to plants found in marsh, beach and bog habitats. Other gardens feature species commonly found on the dry heath, the mountainside, meadows and roadways. A small brook, fed in part by the Sieur de Monts Spring, babbles serenely by Joe-Pye-Weed, boneset, meadowrue and snowberry.

Millions of years ago, Arctic plants spread here in advance of the glaciers which scoured Mt. Desert. Baked-apple berry, mountain cranberry and roseroot can be viewed at the Wild Gardens, as well as on the windswept slopes of the island's mountains. Skillful cultivation



*Thuya Garden—Anne Small photo*

## GARDENS OF ANOTHER EDEN

makes this miniature habitat a true representation of its wild counterpart.

The Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Garden at Seal Harbor is characterized by a formal atmosphere. Called a meeting of East and West, the two-acre garden was designed by Mrs. Rockefeller and the landscape architect Beatrix Farrand. This quiet retreat is a magnificent setting for a large collection of Oriental sculpture. English style flower beds of brilliant annuals and perennials contrast with the background of Maine evergreens. Pagodas, Chinese gilt bronze Buddhas, and Korean lanterns can be appreciated from many angles as one walks through

the Moon Gate in the Chinese Wall, along serene paths and expanses of velvety lawn.

The garden stands today much as it did at the time of Mrs. Rockefeller's death in 1948. Although their 107 room summer home, *Eyrie*, no longer exists, members of the family have maintained the garden, and now open it to the public on Wednesdays during the summer.

Another famous summer residence is **Thuya Lodge**, a charming rustic home which overlooks masses of flower beds set in a garden high above Northeast Harbor. Before the turn of the century, a landscape artist named Joseph H. Curtis

bought much of the eastern shoreline of the quiet harbor. He laid out a terraced approach to the summit, taking full advantage of the views of the yacht-studded harbor below and the open Atlantic far beyond.

Inside the carved cedar gates to the garden, colorful tuberous begonias thrive in the semi-shade. A reflecting pool with raked sand bottom mirrors a variety of native and rare imported trees. A huge stone water jar, a glimpse of fence or a change in the level of the lawn subtly leads the viewer's attention to the next display of blossoms.

Curtis established a trust fund to main-

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tain the lodge and garden for the enjoyment of residents of Northeast Harbor. Now botanists and gardeners come from great distances to view his landscape designs and to study his collection of ancient herbals and books of botanical lore in the library at Thuya Lodge.

Though very different, these three gardens share a significant common legacy. They continue to exist and thrive due to the generosity of people who love Mt. Desert Island.

*Anne Small lives in Woodbury, Connecticut.*

... Ayah

staff indicates the pitch, the shape of the notes the time value. There are also symbols to indicate variations in volume and to indicate *legato* or *staccato* attack. Unfortunately, the author has no such tools available to him. We can only give Jack credit for makin' one helluva good try at doin' the impossible.

R.C.

Ed. Note: We certainly agree.

I just read the latest BitterSweet and must say I'm pleased. Thanks much for the nice story... (however) not all the poems you included in the story are now included in the present manuscript. No big deal. Also, a couple of them have undergone revisions in the past year...

Secondly, although I appreciate the thought that (Lawrence) Ferlinghetti might consider my ms. as one that could be "a big-time book," I must honestly say I don't remember stating his opinion as being that generous in regards to his reaction to my works. It would be great if true... I thought it imperative to set the record straight here. I believe the fairest thing that could be said about Ferlinghetti in response to my poetry is that he has been (was) extremely enthusiastic about my work. Sorry about any past misunderstanding here. I definitely do not want credit for something someone as reputable as Ferlinghetti did not say. And lastly, the title to my third book is SET (not Let) the Children In Your Heart Free.

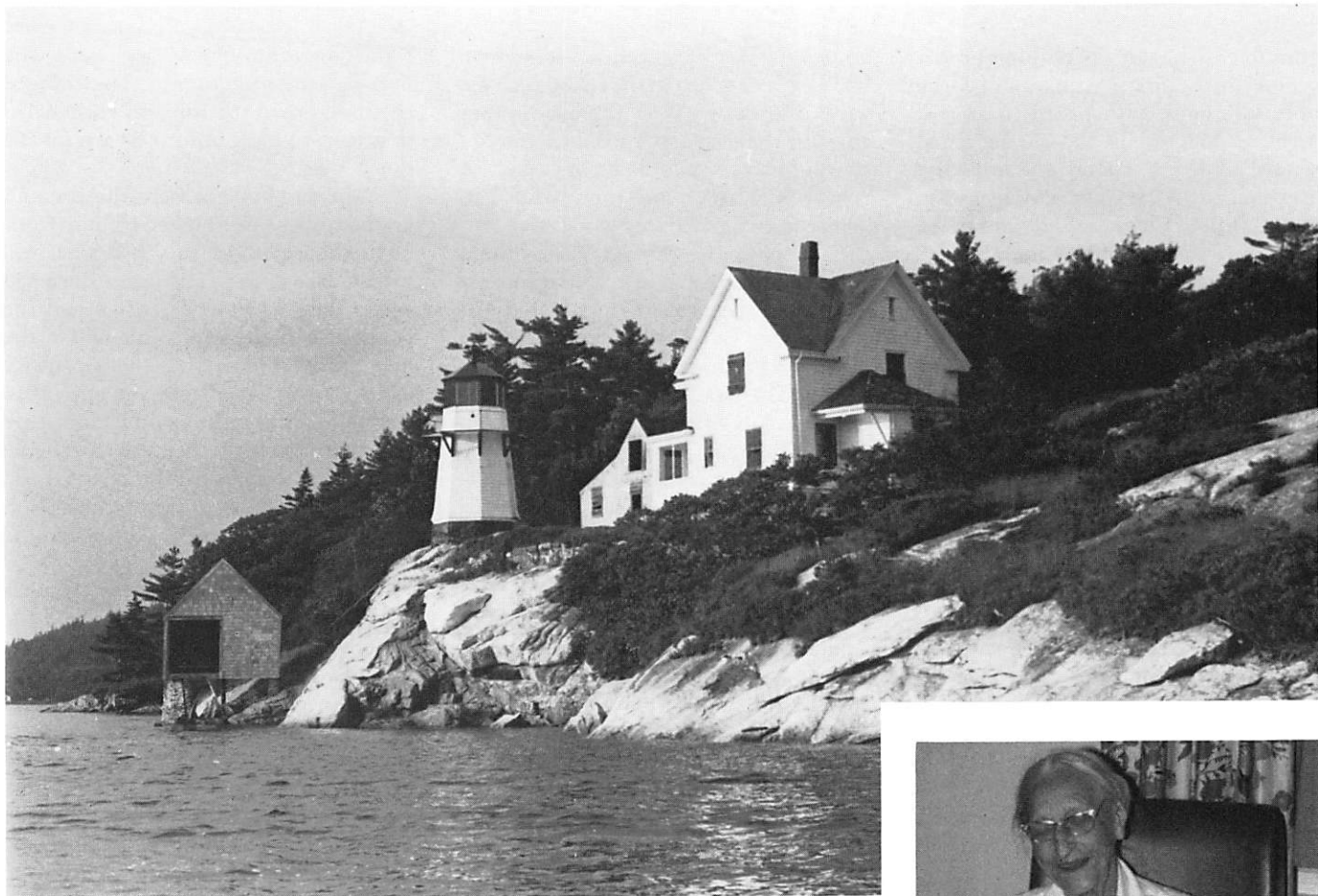
Okay, no more brutalizing an otherwise nicely written story. I really am pleased... BitterSweet as a whole is really beginning to become a well-produced publication. Looks great!

*Rick Crockett  
Portland, Maine*

Ed. Note: A thousand apologies. The assumptions were my own.

N.M.





*The late Anna Haley McCabe, photos courtesy McCabe family.  
Island photos taken by Dr. Clough*



*Perkins Island on the Kennebec River*

## AN ISLAND CHILDHOOD

*by Garrett C. Clough*

*"There's not a square inch of the place that I haven't known; woods and rocks and shore."*

*—Anna Haley McCabe*

As the baby daughter of the first keeper of the Perkins Island light, Anna Haley had many years to learn intimately every detail of this diminutive seven acre island near the mouth of the Kennebec River. Anna's father, Jacob Willard Haley, brought his wife Nellie, their son and infant daughter to the brand new lighthouse in 1898 and he stayed there until his retirement in

1928. The family came from eight years of tending the Sequin Island Light, a few miles out to sea from the opening of the Kennebec at Popham Beach. Anna had spent the first few years of life on Sequin. "People used to come out and want to see the baby that was born on Sequin. But my mother went in to Popham to have me born."

Anna sat in her kitchen in Bath as she

recalled those days of her childhood. I met Mrs. McCabe in the late summer of 1978 after I had lived alone in the old keeper's house on Perkins since the first of June. To me the little island was one of the most beautiful places I had ever known and being there had brought great contentment. "Well, I had many happy hours there," Anna told me. "People used to say, well aren't you

lonesome? I haven't been lonesome a minute in my life. I think you can be more lonesome with people than you can be without them." She was delighted to talk with my friend and me that afternoon in Bath. "Oh, anything you want to know I'll try to tell you. I'd be glad to give you the information. There's so many people to whom ancient history doesn't mean a thing."

Perkins Island is a place of unspoiled harmony of nature and human use. Some day I will write of my own experiences there. The mighty river surrounding it undergoes a slow and constant change which comes back again and again to a peaceful permanence. The tides, sun, fog, wind, rain, moon and stars all become dynamic and significant parts of daily life when you live alone on a small island. The sweeping vistas up and down the river and a small boat carry one as far as their heart or body desires, while the deep untouched forest of 150-year-old pines and ferned glens give all the privacy anyone could need. The daily chores needed to survive comfortably in simple surroundings make for a solitude that is far from lonesome. I often wondered what the life of those people who lived here before me was like, what did they feel about this place? This afternoon I could hear from one who had lived there eighty years ago. Anna McCabe had her own story to tell. What follows comes directly from the tape recordings we made that afternoon talking about the island that Anna knew so well, looking at the old pictures she drew from a box and comparing her memories with what we knew of the island and the river.

*Family origins*—"My mother was born at Parker Head. Her name was Nellie Perkins. Perkins was my grandfather's grandfather (if you can figure that out), who, I've been told, lived on the island at one time. Father was born down at Popham. His father died when he was a year and a half old. Father was with the lighthouse service a long time. He had lots of relatives over on the east side of the river."

*School*—"I had one brother, seven years older. When we got old enough to go to school we had to go to the mainland, to Georgetown. When we used to

go to the West Georgetown school we had to go every day to the mainland. We used to row over. We had a boat in that cove on the east side of the island. My brother and I would go across and he'd row to Marrtown and then we had to walk a mile through the woods to get to the school house. When I started there were about fifteen students and the last year I went there were only four. Then they didn't have it anymore. I went down to Popham, that's where I was sent until I was fourteen. Then I went for a year in Augusta and ended up in Bath. The year I went to Augusta to school I didn't come back for a whole year. There wasn't anybody who worked harder for a little education than I did, I used to say. The West Georgetown school was just a little-bitty thing. I always told my children that if they couldn't learn in the school-houses they have today they were pretty dumb. After I finished school I went back home and stayed a couple of years and then I got a job during the world war in an office."

*The island*—"The south end of the island was always open. No, there were no bushes then, it was meadow. That was where we had the cow. When we first came the barn was on the hill, right on top in back of the house. The government took it down, moved it. We always had a cow there and of course there was the old privy and all the drainage went

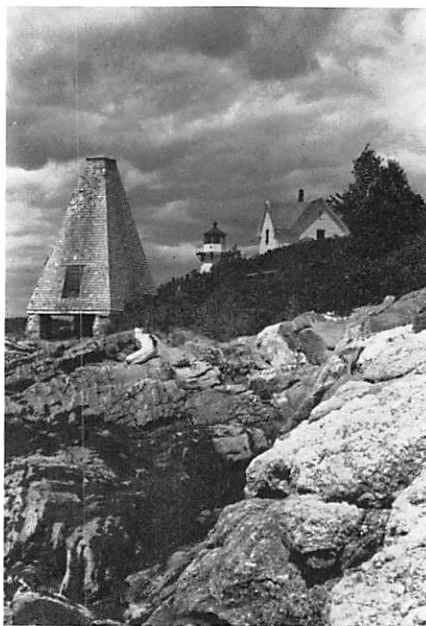
right down into our cellar. That's why they had the barn moved. They moved the barn down the hill and Father had that lean-to built onto the barn on the north side.

"When we first got there, there wasn't any boathouse. We landed right in front of the house where they had what you might call a slip, a platform. All we had was a dory at first. Then we had the boathouse built afterwards. First the boathouse faced north but when the ice came down river it tore the slip all to pieces, just run right up on it. So Father had them turn the boathouse around, turn it to the south, and it lasted much longer. There was an iron winch in it. We used to see seals very often coming by. Sometimes eagles flew over."

*Lighthouse duties*—"It was really a job, it was a hard job, to wind up the weights in the bell tower. The power was like a clock running, the same idea as clockwork, with the bell like a striking clock. We had a crank on the end and a wire cable going to the top over a pulley. I think it lasted about four hours when it was wound clear up so we had to get up in the middle of the night sometimes. If it was too foggy to see across to Parker Head we had to ring the bell.

"Kerosene lit the lighthouse lamp. It was stored off by itself in that little brick house for safety. Quite a long walk and everything there was uphill. The lamp had to be filled every day. Dad used to bring up five gallons to the tower at a time. Father had that nice sheathing put up for panelling in the tower. The government furnished the material. Before it had plastered walls and in the winter it would get all frosty and melt and run down, terrible. My father liked to keep everything looking right up to snuff."

*Life and work on the island*—"My father kept hens. The foundation for the henhouse must still be there, right over the hill from the house at the edge of the woods. We had quite a business there. We were raising broilers. Our broilers were shipped to Boston on the Boston boat just along with the clams. It was quite a big business. We raised about 500 broilers every year. I can't recall what they got for a price back then. I wouldn't have any idea. But I can remember Dad was



shipping eggs to Boston at nineteen cents a dozen. The ground was fertile up there by the hens and that's where we had our garden. We had a yard for the hens to run in. We had yards both north and south of the hen pen and we put them out in the winter on the south side and in the north side in the summer. We planted the south side to a garden.

"I helped a lot with the gardening. We canned everything. We had great stores for winter. Mother canned all the vegetables. We would pick berries; plenty of huckleberries and raspberries and gooseberries. There were a lot of shelves down cellar. We always had milk from the cow and we would set the milk in metal cans down there and make butter. We never got ice, just put things down in the cellar to keep them. No refrigeration at all. We collected rain water in big cisterns down in the cellar. We used that as domestic water. We had the spring for our drinking water, and for the cow and hens. There was quite a ways to lug it. Of course, the cow lugged her own. We'd take her down and let her drink her own water. The well was never dry, it's a spring. If you go over to the east side of the island, the very southeast corner, there's a bluff, kind of a ledge. Right down below the west side of that ledge you can't help but find it. It was there when we came. The place was a farm before the government took it over. Nobody had lived there for several years. The house had fallen down.

"We always had a cat and a dog and a cow. All those things tend to keep wild-life away. There were lots of birds and squirrels around. When we left we had to leave the cow on the island. It had come over on a barge. But the next people didn't know how to take care of it. My father had a heart attack, that's why he left so quickly and he had to leave things like that.

"I didn't leave often. I've been there six months at a time and not go off. Sometimes we couldn't go across the river in the winter. Too much floating ice and storms. But it was never frozen over, even to the Marrtown side; the tides run too fast.

"It was so pretty out there. That stone wall that my father used to keep white-washed. Mother had flowers growing up



and down the banking. With the lawn above it was very, very pretty. I see from your pictures that the lawn in front of the house is all bushes now.

"We cooked on a big woodstove. It was in a shed that was torn down since we left. It was a big shed south of the house, workshop where Father used to store wood and everything else. We had black coal to heat the house in winter. At first we just had two stoves, one in the kitchen and one in the living room. Then in later years they put the furnace in, a hot water furnace in the cellar with radiators. The government delivered the coal from a lighthouse tender. They put it into a bin at the north end of the boat house and then it had to be lugged up to our cellar.

"I think the shingles on the house were asbestos when we were there, maybe slate. I know they weren't wood because we used the water, the rain-water ran into the cisterns. I don't think you can do that with wood shingles, they have some kind of acid in them. That rounded cupboard with the hole right on top and the hinges in the top was where the barrel of flour sat in the pantry. It was just big enough for a barrel of

flour and the cover lifted off without opening the door. We baked all our bread. On the other side where the shelf comes along we always had a barrel of sugar. You know when you live in a place like that you don't go to the store and buy a pound of this and a pound of that. We bought everything in large quantities. The Lighthouse Service didn't furnish anything to eat. On Sequin they used to give us stuff to eat, but some of it you couldn't eat and they finally stopped it. We used to shop for food at Popham. There were two stores there at Popham and there was a store at Parker Head.

"There was a cast iron sink and a pump in the pantry next to the kitchen. It went in a pipe and went overboard. They don't allow that anymore. How did we clean the outhouse? You had to bury it somewhere in the woods. There were a lot of things to think about. But it seems too bad that somebody wouldn't want to live there again.

"Outboard motors were just almost unheard of in those days. Father had an inboard motor, one cylinder with a big spark plug on top. It was easier than it was to row. In those days the shipyards were all running and there was lots of



driftwood in the river. One of the chores that we did practically every day was to go down around the shore and pick up driftwood. We used that in the summer to cook. My father never cut down any trees for wood, unless it was a dead tree or something he wanted to clear land where he had the hens. He never cut any of the trees down. When the ice would come down in the spring there was lots of logs and pulpwood. We used to go out and pick up logs and haul them in. Then in the cove down at the south end of the island we'd put a boom of logs across the cove and keep the logs in there. We'd get our firewood that way. Dad never did cut any trees down. We used a cross-cut saw to saw them up; a two-man cross-cut, one man and a woman, or a girl. We lugged it all to the house. Can't use a wheelbarrow on Perkins Island, there's too many rocks. No, I was never lonesome there. I didn't have many playmates though. My mother was my playmate."

*Neighbors*—"The folks living in West Georgetown were mostly fishing or clamming, things like that. Mostly clamming in those days. They shipped the clams to Boston. My father didn't do much fishing himself. We watched the boat go by. It stopped at Popham. It was a steamer that ran all summer and it went to Boston in a day. The boat went up to Bath every day the year round. In the summer it went twice a day. It carried mail, and passengers and freight. It stopped at Cox's Head, Bay Point, stopped at Parker Head. Well, they called it Sunrise, that farm that used to be up there by Harrington's Head it was. Some of the people that used to live across the dam there could go down and take the boat. And it stopped at West Georgetown, then at Phippsburg Center and then on to Bath.

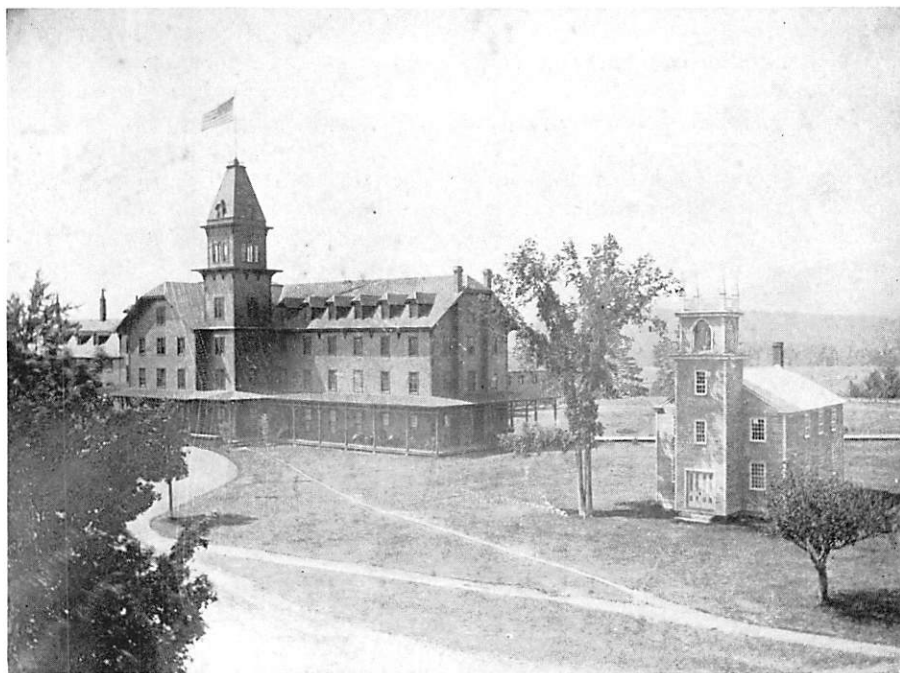
"There were lots of vessels on the river. They used to ship coal in and ice and lumber out. There were big lumber drives but that would be way up the Kennebec. There were plenty of boats going up and down the river. Of course towards the last of our stay there boats kind of went out of use but they're all coming back again now. I had one of those long spyglasses. I used to sit on

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## Can You Place It?



*Can You Place It?* These two photographs are of a New England locale, taken in the 1880's. If you can identify it, write to BitterSweet, P.O. Box 266, Cornish, ME 04020. Those with the right answer will be published. (We are always looking for the loan of unusual old photos. We will return them unharmed with SASE.)



# If The Shoe Fits . . . or Norway Footwear—A Step Above

by Lauren MacArthur



*"We think it can be done. If we didn't think it could be done, we wouldn't be here."*

With the determination those words express, Louis Johnson, president of Norway Footwear, Norway, Maine, is proving old-fashioned American ingenuity, hard work, and a dream can still produce success.

Shoe factories all over the nation are in trouble. Fifty factories and 27,000 jobs have been lost over the past two years. The shoe industry, like the copper, steel, and tuna industries, is petitioning the government for import relief. Imported shoes, according to the industry, are the main reason for the decline in domestic shoe manufacturing.

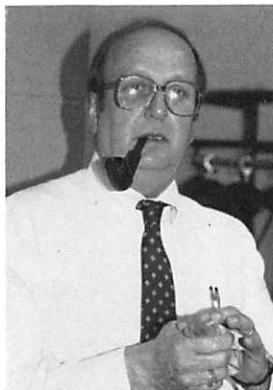
But something different is happening at Norway Footwear. The 66,000-square-foot factory is humming with increased production.

Two hundred fifty nine employees are turning out 3500 pairs of shoes every day—an increase of 1900 per day since they took over the factory from Miller Shoe last February 28th. All they can manufacture through September of this year are sold already.

"We'll be producing 5000 shoes per day as soon as possible," says Johnson. And when they are manufacturing that amount, two hundred and seventy five people will be employed there.

Norway Footwear is making bowling shoes for Brunswick. They are making shoes for Thom McAnn, L.L. Bean, Quoddy, Cape Cod, Open Country, Wolverine and Ricci of New York—to name just a few.

"The big thing today is quality, customer service, and value," asserts Johnson. "And the right people...people with knowledge and experience in the shoe business. Surround yourself with these people and the product has to be right."



Louis Johnson,  
President of Norway Footwear

Johnson made his way to the top from the absolute bottom. He started out as a last-puller, "a few years back." (A last-puller pulls the form around which the shoe is sized—the last—out of the shoe.)

Johnson knows the business. And he is on deck all the time. He can be seen at the factory at 7:30 a.m. every day. If a deadline must be met, he will be right there—sometimes at 4:30 a.m.—helping out with whatever function needs attention.

He hasn't forgotten where he began. He has a friendly "open door" policy with his employees. And he recognizes their value. "If I didn't need those people out there (in the factory), they wouldn't be here," he says emphatically.

Working together for the benefit of all is his philosophy. As the business profits, so will all involved—that's how the employees and administration of Norway Footwear work.

Together, they are making a statement: the "American Dream" is not dead!

a capriccio

i never knew there were tides in the forest:  
ledges running fast downhill riffs into spring  
playing clear-cut glass harmonica tunes  
around the rocked rims of chromatic bowls  
revolving with water & dancing with sky  
drawing wet fingertips of wind  
in circles through grandstands of sweet birch  
& beech

soft pedaling moss & crescendoing past  
the great curtains of hemlock &  
trumpets of oak.

we gather wood on a deep-rhythmed  
delta of rain.

Grete Goodwin  
Cape Neddick, Maine

## . . . Notes From Brookfield Farm

the gentle sprinkle had given way to a slanted rain that descended from a windswept pewter sky.

It is a joy to awaken today and find the rain still falling with determination, and hear the water as it thunders over the old mill dam to go rushing down the brook as if in a sudden hurry to reach the Saco River and eventually the Atlantic. The spring in the sheep pasture across the road, which yesterday was completely dry, is now filled to the brim.

It is a good feeling to enter the barn, smell the fragrance of the hay and clover from the second cutting, and know that every forkful was safely tagged and labeled in the loft before the rain came. One can better appreciate the steady staccato on the metal roof when there is no raked hay being drenched.

It is a day when I can enjoy a brief respite from cutting wood and fence posts and spend a few pleasant hours in my study. Oh, I have some posts and rails under the barn that I have put off peeling with a drawshave for just such a day. There will come a time today when I shall welcome the chance to perform some physical task, but for now I shall build a fire in the fireplace in the living room to drive away the chill of the damp morning, take up the pen and write, perhaps read a book, and savor the pot-pourri of pleasant odors from the kitchen where Diana is at work making pickles. Best of all, I know that I can face the weeks to come without fear that the well will go dry and the sheep will be without sufficient pasturage.

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# Goings On

## MAINE EVENTS

August 2, 6, 7, 9, 13, 16: Bar Harbor, Band Concert, Village Green, 8 p.m. 3: Rangeley, Public Library's 75th Anniversary, Library Lawn, 7:30 p.m.; Boothbay Harbor, Rotary Lobstertime & Auction, Center Common.

3-5: Rockland, 37th Annual Maine Seafoods Festival; Brunswick, Maine Festival of the Arts. 4: Caratunk, Kennebec Fifty Flat-water Canoe Race; Houlton, Lion's Club Circus, Community Park; Denmark, Blueberry Country Fair, Village School, Baked goods, crafts, salad-smorgasbord luncheon, 10-2. 4-12: Presque Isle, Northern Maine Fair.

5-12: Topsham Fair. 6-7: Orland, H.O.M.E. Craft Farm Fair. 8: Rangeley, Stanley Steamer Antique Car Tour. 9: Rangeley, Flea Market, Episcopal Church Undercroft, 9:30-2 p.m.; Portland, Summer Film Series "Topkapi," Museum of Art Auditorium, 7:30 p.m. 9-18: Skowhegan Fair.

10-12: Belfast, Holy Mackerel Tournament; Lewiston, Downeast Horse Congress, Fairgrounds; Cumberland, 15th Annual United Maine Craftsmen's Fair, Cumberland County Fairgrounds, 10-6 daily. 11: Winslow Blueberry Festival, 10 a.m.; Wilton Blueberry Bazaar; Rockport 20th Annual Garden Club Auction, Opera House, 9-3; Brunswick, Scottish Games, Thomas Point Beach.

11-12: Falmouth, Monhegan Yacht Race; Owls Head, Annual Transportation Rally, Knox County Airport; Union, Maine Antique Festival, Fairgrounds. 12: Camden, Megunticook Lake Flatwater Canoe Race; Wilton Blueberry Festival Road Race, Canoe Race, Fishing Derby; Bar Harbor, Visitation of "Royal Viking Sea" Cruise Ship, 8-4.

15: Ogunquit Sidewalk Art Show. 16: Rangeley Annual Blueberry Festival, 10-2; Summer Film Series "The Conversation," Museum of Art Auditorium, Portland, 7:30 p.m.

17-19: Phillips Old Home Days; Machias Blueberry Festival. 18: Freedom, Annual Blueberry Festival, Dirigo Grange Hall, 5-6:30 p.m.; Castine, Retired Skippers Race; West Forks, Lower Dead River Whitewater Canoe Race; Coopers Mills, Annual Auction, Firehouse, 10 a.m.; Bar Harbor, Blueberry Pancake Breakfast, Masonic Hall; Portland, WCSH Sidewalk Art Festival. 18-19: Brunswick, "Wings of Freedom" Air Show, Naval Air Station, 10-5.

19: Biddeford Pool, Lobster Festival; Kennebunkport 29th Annual Art Exhibit, Kennebunk River Club, 1-5 p.m. 19-21: Ogunquit, Antique Show, Dunaway Center. 19-25: Union Fair. 21-24: Ocean Park, 44th State of Maine Writers Conference. 23: Portland, Summer Film Series "The American Friend." 23-25: York, 17th Annual Seacoast Crafts Fair, St. Christopher's Auditorium. 23-26: Dover-Foxcroft, Piscataquis Valley Fair; Acton Fair. 23: Bridgton, Blue Ribbon Festival, Benefit of Northern Cumberland

Memorial Hospital, Elementary School, 3-8 p.m. 24-26: Cherryfield, Washington County Fair.

25: Rangeley, Gun Show, Rangeley Lakes Region School; Sat. 9-6, Sun 9-2. 26: Owls Head, Auto Auction; Brunswick, Obsolete Auto Show, Thomas Point Beach.

26-Sept. 3: Windsor Fair. 30: Ogunquit, Kite Flying Contest. 31-Sept. 2: Brunswick, 6th Annual Blue Grass Festival; 31-Sept. 3: Blue Hill Fair; Springfield Fair. Sept. 2: Skowhegan Log Day. Sept. 2: Owls Head, Motorcycle Meet/Air Show, Owls Head Transportation Museum, Knox County Airport; Augusta, Maine Women's Distance Classic 10 km.; Kittery, Trading Post Canoe Race, Spruce Creek.

## VERMONT EVENTS

August 3-5: Manchester, Southern Vt. Craft Fair. 4: Orleans County Arts & Crafts Fair, Fairgrounds, 10-4; Townshend, 34th Hospital Fair Day, Auction, Concert, on the Common. 4-5: Bristol, 11th Annual Summer Festival, Federal Church, 10-5; So. Burlington, Champlain Valley Gem & Mineral Show, High School. 4-12: Wilmington, Art on the Mountain, Juried show, Haystack Mt. ski area. 10-6 daily.

5: Holland, Old Home Day; Rockingham, 78th Annual Pilgrimage to the Meeting House, 3 p.m.; Killington, Green Mt. 5.3 mile Road Race, 11 a.m.

10-11: Burlington, Antiques Show & Sale, St. Mark's Church. 10-12: Grand Isle, Art Show & Sale. Elem. School; Stowe, 27th Annual Antique & Classic Car Rally. 11: Hyde Park Family Festival 9-4; Thetford Hill, 48th Annual Fair & Barbeque. Festival 9-4; Thetford Hill, 48th Annual Fair & Barbeque. 12: Manchester, Horse Show. 15-19: Barton, Orleans County Fair. 16: Calais, Vermont Day, Kent Tavern Museum, 10-4. 17-18: Woodstock, Festival, 9-5. 18: E. Corinth, Old-fashioned Chicken Pie Supper, Union 36 School, 5-6-7 p.m. 18-19: Bondville Fair.

20-26: Stowe, Grand Prix Tennis Tournament. 23-26: Lyndonville, Caledonia County Fair. 24-26: Wilmington, Deerfield Valley Farmer's Day. 26: Calais, Antique Gas & Steam Engine Meet & Show, Kent Tavern Museum.

27-Sept. 3: Essex Jct., Champlain Valley Exposition; Ripton, Open House in Robert Frost Cabin 1-4. 31-Sept. 2: Annual Stratton Wursthfest, traditional German/Austrian music & dancing, Stratton Arts Festival. Sept. 1: Cambridge Fall Festival and 3 mi. Fun Run. Sept. 1-2: Guilford, 19th Annual Labor Day Weekend Festival; Northfield Labor Day Weekend Celebration. Sept. 1-9: Rutland, Vermont State Fair. 3: Guilford Fair.

## ETC.

August through Sept. 9: Jamie Wyeth: An American View will be at the Portland Museum of Art, Seven Congress Square, Portland, Maine.



## Edwin Arlington Robinson MAINE'S LOST POET

*by Carol S. Griffiths*

One day, a century ago, a teenage boy stood with his friends in the cellar of a school in Gardiner, Maine. He was dark and rather quiet, not usually given to socializing with other boys, but this particular day he surprised his comrades by reading them several of his poems. When he finished, he asked his companions for their opinion. Not being especially literary, they were unimpressed and did not hesitate to say so; whereupon the young poet, Edwin Arlington Robinson, cast his poems into the furnace.

Fortunately, E.A. Robinson continued to write poetry, and eventually became one of the leading poets of American letters. The early drive to be perfect in his work continued.

Robinson was a man of vision with two seemingly irreconcilable dreams: he wanted to spend his life writing poetry, and he wanted to be a success on his own terms. He refused to cheapen his poetry for the sake of commercial success.

Robinson's New England roots ran deep, and his Maine upbringing was a prime factor in his writing career. He was born on December 22, 1869, in the small town of Head Tide, Maine, on the Sheepscot River. He was the third boy of the family where a girl had been hoped for, and his parents had no particular name chosen for him. He remained "Baby" for several months until a group of Mary Robinson's friends forced the issue. One lady from Arlington, Massachusetts, had the idea of drawing names from a hat. Mrs. Robinson had no objection and the name Edwin was drawn. His middle name came from the home of the lady with the original idea. Thus was the poet named.

The Robinson family did not stay long at Head Tide. Well before the newest son was a year old, Edward and Mary Robinson moved their family to Gardiner on the Kennebec River. Here was E.A.'s childhood "Tilbury Town"—a

thriving place. The Robinson house sat on a quiet residential street not far from the town center; the town graveyard stood close by on the other side.

Edwin was involved in community life, as any young boy would be, and he also watched many a funeral pass his house. The boy learned to deal with town life on the one hand and death on the other, both of which contributed greatly to the poetry he would write.

Young Robinson was weaned on failure; his father suffered severe financial losses, while his elder brothers eventually succumbed to morphine and alcohol.

Edwin spent a lonely childhood. His brothers were too old to be companions, and Edwin was too shy to make many friends. Much of his free time he spent down by the wharves on the Kennebec River, watching the boats.

At an early age he realized he was poetically inclined, and began to follow his dreams with the help and encouragement of Dr. A.T. Shumann, the family physician who lived nearby. Shumann was himself a poet, but he recognized Edwin's talent as far superior to his own. He was the boy's main source of friendship and support, and an outlet for Edwin's poetic aspirations until 1891, when E.A. entered Harvard as a special student.

Harvard was all a young poet could hope for, but Robinson's education was aborted after only two years by the death of his father. After hurrying home to Gardiner, he found things were not at all well: finances were severely strained, and family members were ill. A short time later, Mary Palmer Robinson succumbed to black diphtheria, a dreaded disease of the period. Doctor and minister refused to enter the house, and the undertaker left the casket on the porch, leaving the sons to lay out their mother and carry her to the cemetery.

From the town of Gardiner, Edwin Arlington Robinson began to learn the definitions of success and failure. Money, a good job, and the neighbor's respect constituted success; the lack thereof, failure. Here was the remains of the Robinson family, who had once been well off, now without money. Here was the youngest son, without an honest job to support the family when the elder members were incapacitated. He knew very well what the townspeople thought of him, but he continued to do the only thing he knew—write poetry—and to turn a deaf ear to the gossip of his neighbors.

It's probably not surprising that Edwin Arlington Robinson shortly left Gardiner and Maine, for the anonymity of New York. Perhaps the unhappiness of his Gardiner life became too much for him, or maybe it was just a feeling that he must strike out on his own that caused his departure. Whatever the reason, Robinson departed with the feeling that he was a failure at everything except poetry and the determination to make that his life's work.



Life in New York was not much easier. Robinson lived mostly on the charity of friends—among them President Theodore Roosevelt, an avid admirer.

For the rest of his life, Robinson lived in New York and New Hampshire, seldom returning to Maine. Yet there was a part of Maine that Robinson could not leave behind, and that was a part of his being. His recollections of the small town life provided the themes for many of his poems. He took an assortment of the characters from his Maine background and created his own Tilbury Town, a representation of typical New England.

Success came to him late in life, after he had published many volumes of poetry. He finally gained international acclaim and won three Pulitzer Prizes and several honorary degrees before his death in 1935. Robinson's body was brought back to the family plot for burial up the road behind the Gardiner house.

Often in critical works, scholars make a point of saying that Robinson wrote depressing poetry about unfortunate and miserable people, and that the reason behind it was his unhappy life. In some sense this is partially true. Robinson discovered over the years that he was not interested in successful people, that same quality of success he achieved so late in life; rather he found he cared more deeply for the unsuccessful—something he felt he had been for years. And still, so often Robinson's verse contains optimism and peace where the reader would not expect to find those feelings. He retains an air of quiet hope and humor, those very qualities which kept him going through his own hard times.

The town of Gardiner has long basked in the reflected glory of her native son. That his eventual success was gained through his depiction of the failures of the town is the ultimate irony.

---

*Carol Griffiths wrote her thesis at Bates College on Edwin Arlington Robinson. She lives in Monmouth, Maine.*



### THE DARK HILLS

Dark hills at evening in the west,  
Where sunset hovers like a sound  
Of golden horns that sang to rest  
Old bones of warriors under ground,  
Far now from all the bannered ways  
Where flash the legions of the sun,  
You fade—as if the last of days  
Were fading and all wars were done.

### THE SHEAVES

Where long the shadows of the wind had  
rolled,  
Green wheat was yielding to the change  
assigned;  
And as by some vast magic undivined  
The world was turning slowly into gold.  
Like nothing that was ever bought or sold  
It waited there, the body and the mind;  
And with a mighty meaning of a kind  
That tells the more the more it is not told.  
So in a land where all days are not fair,  
Fair days went on till on another day  
A thousand golden sheaves were lying there,  
Shining and still, but not for long to stay—  
As if a thousand girls with golden hair  
Might rise from where they slept and go away.

### AN OLD STORY

Strange that I did not know him then,  
That friend of mine.  
I did not even show him then  
One friendly sign;  
But cursed him for the ways he had  
To make me see  
My envy of the praise he had  
For praising me.  
I would have rid the earth of him  
Once, in my pride.  
I never knew the worth of him  
Until he died.

### CALVARY

Friendless and faint, with martyred steps  
and slow,  
Faint for the flesh, but for the spirit free,  
Stung by the mob that came to see the show,  
The Master toiled along to Calvary;  
We gibed him, as he went, with houndish glee,  
Till his dimmed eyes for us did overflow;  
We cursed his vengeless hands thrice  
wretchedly,  
And this was nineteen hundred years ago.  
But after nineteen hundred years the shame  
Still clings, and we have not made good  
the loss  
That outraged faith has entered in his name.  
Ah, when shall come love's courage to be  
strong!  
Tell me, O Lord—tell me, O Lord, how long  
Are we to keep Christ writhing on the cross!

# Ruth Glazer and the Saco River Music Festival

by Charlene Barton

People in the Ossipee River Valley take great joy in music, according to Ruth Glazer, founder and Executive Director of the Saco River Festival Association, an organization which brings some of the world's finest chamber music into the area each summer.

"Everyone may not understand the allegro or the andante, but that doesn't matter," she explains. "What matters is the spirit to enjoy music."

She and her husband Frank, pianist with the New England Piano Quartette and Artist in Residence at Bates College, had to find that spirit before making the commitment to move into Ruth's family homestead in Kezar Falls. The Black Farm had been in her family since the late 1700's when the dwelling was a log cabin. In 1820 the house was built and, as a girl growing up in Boston, Ruth spent summers at the farm with her grandmother and grandfather. She admits that at the time she did not fully appreciate some of the features of the setting, for example the heat and bugs. When her mother offered her the farm about thirty years ago, she refused it, as had her brother and a second cousin. She advised her mother to put it up for sale.

But she and Frank did return to Kezar Falls for one last look at the homestead. Frank immediately fell in love with the antique cape, ell and barn that stretched out, almost a part of the landscape; and with the brook that could be heard, rather than seen, flowing beneath the pine trees. His mother-in-law gave it to him on the spot. His brother-in-law's advice concerning home improvements was, "tear it down!"

Until 1974, the Glazers lived in New York and used the Black Farm as a

summer home. Then, ten years ago, Frank—a renowned concert pianist with a prestigious background which includes being Professor of Music for many years at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, N.Y. and teaching at the University of Southern Maine (where he was honored with the Distinguished Scholar in the Performing Arts Award)—was offered a residency at Bates College. Living year 'round at the farm became a real possibility.

"We wondered if we could live in Maine," recalls Ruth. "We wondered if Maine was culturally alive." The couple

Ruth responded.

"The kids in the band were scared and excited," Ruth recalls, "and Don worked them really hard. They rehearsed every day and Frank loved it. People wondered why anyone who plays with the Boston Symphony would want to play with the Saco Valley High School Band," she continues.

There was no question about that for the Glazers. Although the setting was a gym rather than a concert hall, and the accompaniment a high school band rather than a symphony orchestra, all who were there that night were aware of the excitement and energy, the awe and inspiration.

"At the end of the concert, the students gave Frank a plaque," Ruth remembers. "The inscription thanked him for working with them and said how much they loved him. He nearly cried."

By the time that they had returned home, they had decided to move to Kezar Falls. They had found what mattered—the spirit to enjoy music—and Kezar Falls was where they wanted to be.

In 1976, the Glazers moved back to Kezar Falls

into exquisitely renovated farm buildings. In her typical energetic and enthusiastic fashion, Ruth lost no time in planning a concert series for that very summer. She had many friends and acquaintances in the music world, and arranging a series of outstanding programs was no problem. Concerts that first summer included the Eastman Woodwind Quartette, a string ensemble, four hands for piano, and Frank at the piano with his brother David on clarinet. (Frank was one of a family of eight sons; each played an instrument. Frank has been playing since he was



(L. to r.) Barbara Korn, Patricia Tewksbury, Ruth Glazer.  
(Charlene Barton photo)

decided to find out if anyone in their neighborhood was interested in music.

One of Ruth's first actions was to contact Don Dutil, band director at Saco Valley High School. At the time, Don was planning a spring band concert to raise money for band uniforms. Ruth suggested that Frank perform with the band and that the cost of tickets be increased in order to raise more money.

According to Ruth, Frank was amazed. "A pianist can't play with a band!" he exclaimed.

"I just promised that you would,"



four; teaching since he was seventeen.)

An adequate site for the concerts was needed, however; one with good acoustics, a stage, comfortable space for the audience and an attractive setting. Ruth contacted John Hoyt, Superintendent of Schools in M.S.A.D. #55.

"He was marvelous," Ruth remembers. "He took us to every possible location. When we saw the Cornish Elementary School, we knew that it was perfect. John was marvelous in helping us to get everything ready. We must all be very grateful to him for being so helpful."

It poured the evening of the first concert that summer. Musicians were in white suits and the ladies wore long gowns. Every time a car drove into the parking lot, they ran to the window exclaiming, "Look! Someone is coming!" Ruth laughs.

The initial season was a tremendous success and Ruth, envisioning continued growth, put together a Board of Directors and incorporated the Saco River Festival Association. Bernard Carpenter of Lewiston was the first Chairman of the Board. His mother, Flora Carpenter, is a life-long resident of Kezar Falls and a retired teacher who devoted her life to promoting music in the area. She is Honorary Chairman of the S.R.F.A. Board of Directors.

In the eight years that have followed, the Saco River Festival Concerts have become a high point of the summer for many year 'round and seasonal residents of Southwestern Maine. By 1979, audiences had increased from 520 in 1976, to 1,022 and over one hundred nationally known performing artists had been presented. Now the number of annual concerts has increased and the scope of the program has broadened. In addition to bringing some of the best chamber music available to the area, the S.R.F.A. has become a forum for local artists and craftspeople who exhibit at each concert. Although a lot of work is involved and the exhibitions are only open for the one day of the concert, it is considered an honor to be asked to show one's work.

Morning coffee talks precede many concerts. Informal and informative, the coffee talks combine some of the finest

things in life—good music, good food and good company.

Artists perform portions of the evening program, then discuss the themes and composers with the audience. Coffee and home baked cakes made by the ladies of the S.R.F.A. Board are served. The exhibit area is open and, as they say of the best things in life—it's free! These begin promptly at 10:00 a.m. and end punctually at 10:45 a.m. when coffee is served. Ruth observes that music lovers who are unable to attend evening programs often go to the coffee talks.

A "Sentimental Journey" has become one of the most popular parts of the summer season. This "trip" is sure to be one of the most beautiful and nostalgic tours available at the price! Frank plays an assortment of familiar and well loved pieces from the past while "travelers" enjoy picnic lunches served on gaily decorated tables. Once again, coffee and delicious cakes are served. Ruth describes this event as a "joyful coming together."

Concerts, exhibits, coffee talks and special events are only part of the S.R.F.A.'s contribution to the community. The organization has also supported arts activities in the schools by purchasing instruments, treating S.V.H.S. band members to the Portland Symphony performances, sponsoring workshops, and funding dance and music programs. The annual Spring Arts Festival, held in District schools was actually Ruth's idea. With the cooperation and effort of the District, a grant to the Maine State Commission on the Arts and Humanities was written, support from local businesses was obtained and an enjoyable and educational spring tradition was initiated. The purpose of this festival, which is usually held in May, is to focus on the arts in the schools and in doing so to provide rural Maine students with educational and cultural experiences otherwise unavailable to them. Activities include an art exhibit and demonstrations and performances by professionals in the Arts.

"It is written into the charter to stimulate arts activities in the community and to work toward the education of young children," Ruth points out.

Most of the organization's financial support is provided by individuals who

love music. Some area businesses give support by way of ads in the programs and there has been an annual grant from the Maine State Commission on the Arts and Humanities. As for audience support, Barbara Korn of Parsonsfield and past Chairman of the S.R.F.A. Board reports, "We have the kind of community support that everyone dreams of! There has been a hard core of community-minded people who are firm believers in community activity which has given us support from the beginning. Young, artistically oriented people have moved into the community and helped to keep the support buoyant," she continues.

"A lot of people have been living here a long time. The concert series has filled a great need for them," Ruth believes. "They have been yearning for something like this. This is a very musical community—not in performance, perhaps, but in their joy for music. You should hear them sing at the Riverside Church," she adds.

The S.R.F.A. audience represents a true cross-section of people. Some are very young, lap size, in fact; some are silver haired. Some (about two thirds) are permanent residents; some come to the area only during the summer, and some come from Portland, Brunswick or even New Hampshire. "In Portland there is not much summer music other than the Symphony," Ruth explains.

Some of the audience are musicians; some are just acquiring an appreciation for chamber music because of the concerts and coffee talks.

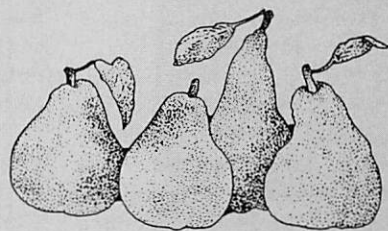
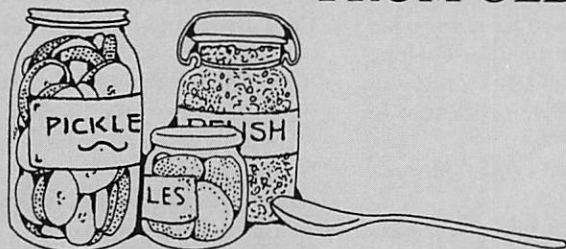
"This is an enrichment that the Glazers have brought here," Barbara points out.

Ruth, Barbara and Patricia Tewksbury of Kezar Falls, present Chairman of the S.R.F.A. Board, agree that they share many wonderful memories of the concerts. Particularly unforgettable was the night of a summer electrical storm. Linda Wetherill was playing a haunting solo on the flute and the lights went out. Candles were lit and the concert continued, enhanced by the romance of soft lights.

Also memorable, but of a different mood, was the evening that the barking of a persistent dog provided unwanted counter-point to the program. Ruth chased the dog away with a stick. After-

# Homemade

## PICKLES, PRESERVES & FRUIT SALAD FROM OLD "RECEIPTS"



### Green Tomato Preserve

*One pound green tomatoes, 2 pounds green apples, 1/2 pint water, a few spinach leaves, sugar.*

Wash apples and tomatoes and cut up in small pieces, place in preserving pan with the water and the spinach leaves tied together so that they can be removed later. Cook to a pulp, then rub through a sieve.

Return to pan, add 3/4 of a pound of sugar to every pound of pulp. Boil for 10 minutes, stirring constantly. Turn into glasses and cover with paraffin when cold. This is delicious as a relish, served with pork or duck.

### Ripe Plum Jelly

*4 cups juice  
7-1/2 cups sugar  
1/2 bottle fruit pectin*

To prepare juice, crush thoroughly about 4 pounds fully ripe fruit. Do not peel or pit. Add 1 cup water, bring to a boil, and simmer, covered, 10 minutes. Place in jelly cloth or bag; squeeze out juice. (Sour clingstone plums make best jelly. If sweet plums are used, substitute 1/2 cup strained lemon juice for 1/2 cup of the plum juice specified.)

Measure sugar and juice into large saucepan and mix.

Bring to a boil over hottest fire and at once add bottled fruit pectin, stirring constantly. Then bring to a full rolling boil and boil hard one-half minute.

Remove from fire, skim, pour quickly. Paraffin hot jelly at once.

### Delicious Fruit Salad

*1 slice pineapple  
1 orange  
12 pitted dates  
1/2 cup broken walnuts  
1 banana (sliced)  
2 cups white grapes  
Cooked salad dressing  
Lettuce*

Cut pineapple, dates, and pulp of orange into small pieces. Add nuts, banana and grapes. Mix thoroughly. Add salad dressing to moisten and serve in lettuce cups with additional dressing.

### Sweet Cucumber Pickles

Soak small cucumbers in strong salt water for 24 hours, 1 cup salt to four cups water. Drain, dry.  
*2 cups salted cucumbers  
1 quart strong vinegar  
1 quart water  
4 cups sugar  
2 tablespoons spices, mixed (cloves, cinnamon, allspice, nutmeg)*

Heat liquid, sugar and spices to boiling, add drained cucumbers, boil 15 minutes; pack hot in scalded jars and seal.

### Sweet Pickled Pears

Pare, core and quarter 7 pounds of pears. Boil together for 10 minutes 2 pounds of brown sugar and 1 quart of cider vinegar. Tie in cheesecloth bag 2 tablespoons cinnamon and a scant tablespoon of cloves. Put with the vinegar and boil. Add the pears and cook gently until the pears look clear and soft. Remove spices. Place pears in jars and pour over the boiling syrup.

### Ginger Chutney

Wash, pare and slice thin 16 apples, cut into small pieces 2 cups preserved ginger, slice 9 sweet peppers, removing seeds and core. Tie in cheesecloth bag 10 bay leaves, 1-1/2 teaspoons whole cloves and 2 chili peppers. Put apples, peppers and ginger, and cheesecloth with the spices in the preserving kettle and add 1 pound brown sugar, 1 tablespoon salt, 3 cups cider vinegar and 1 cup cold water.

Cook slowly until thick. Remove spices. Turn into sterilized jars and seal while hot.

### Sweet Pickled Beets

Boil beets as for table, remove skins; if large, slice into jars or, if small, leave whole. Make a syrup of 1 quart vinegar, 3 cups sugar and 1/2 teaspoon ground cloves. Fill the jars with the beets and pour the hot syrup over them. Allow air to escape by pressing silver fork down sides of jar and seal tight.

Wales; his tragic death at the hands of King Harold of the Anglo-Saxons; and the latter's ultimate defeat by William of Normandy in 1066 at the Battle of Hastings.

"Charlie kept telling me I had a book. I thought, 'Oh, I couldn't write a book. A book is a huge thing! No way was I going to write a book!' But to humor Charlie as much as anything else, I decided to send what I had written to a publisher and see what would happen."

It went first to Houghton-Mifflin, which was at the top of a long list of publishing companies she had jotted down on a piece of paper. She hadn't even written the climax, but the publishers bought it anyway and requested that the remainder of the novel be sent as soon as possible.

Like a skyrocket, her life once again was celestial-bound. "I was in such shock!" is the way she describes her reaction upon learning that her first and unfinished novel had an instant publisher.

"We were in an apartment building," she recalls, "with a big central hallway. A letter came from Houghton-Mifflin, and I ripped it open, wondering where the manuscript was. I read it and my jaw dropped. I grabbed the poor postman and kissed him just when everyone in the apartment building was coming out in the hallway to get the mail."

The postman, a small black man, stepped back in surprise.

"W-what happened?" he asked as soon as he could recover some degree of composure.

"I sold a book!" Morgan vociferated.

Everyone in the apartment exclaimed, "Wow!"

"After that," Morgan laughs, "every time the postman came with another letter from the publishers, he stepped back. He wasn't sure what I was going to do."

To make it possible for Morgan to finish her first novel, Charlie—who at the time was flying charter flights—volunteered to remain at home and do the housework, cooking, and a multitude of other tasks so that she could channel all her energies into her writing. He soon discovered that he actually enjoyed being a house spouse, even

though it only took two weeks to finish the novel.

When it became obvious that Morgan's first novel was destined to be a success and was scheduled to come out in paperback, Charlie made a monumental and magnanimous offer that has contributed much toward molding a successful and rewarding marriage for both.

"It looks as though you are going to be a writer," Charlie commented. Then he suggested, "Why don't I retire, and I will do everything else; all you will have to do is write?"

"You don't want to do that," Morgan protested.

"Yes, I think I do," Charlie replied.

Morgan discovered that her appetite for doing research on Celtic history and culture is insatiable. Freed from all domestic responsibilities, she began searching eagerly for material on the legendary Brian Boru, the tenth century colossus of Ireland who performed Herculean feats such as defeating the theretofore invincible Vikings and uniting the bellicose Irish tribes. She made three trips to Ireland, "just to wander around, walk, bicycle, and talk to people, (to) try to go back into the 10th century and relive the way it actually was then."

She went to the Smithsonian Institute and was shocked to see how little material was available there on the great Irish hero. Despite the lack of material, however, she persevered; eventually amassing an imposing personal library of Celtic history that very well may be the most complete, private or public, in the United States.

She devoted up to ten and twelve hours a day to writing and researching. The most amazing things began to happen. She was writing entire scenes before doing the research. For instance, she wrote the dramatic account of the Battle of Sulcoit, 968—in which Brian Boru distinguished himself as a great warrior, military strategist, and leader of men by decisively defeating the Norsemen—before she actually read a documentary account of the battle.

"I wrote the entire scene one long, rainy afternoon, purely from my imagination. About six months later I came across a manuscript with an eyewitness

account of the battle. It was exactly what I had written! It gave me a really strange feeling. That happened all the way through the book."

There are those who have said, "She has to be a reincarnation of a Celtic princess or a goddess." Be that as it may, the signs were auspicious for Morgan Llywelyn. *The Lion of Ireland*, in excess of 500 pages, was on the bookstand in 1980. It was her second great success in two years.

On Christmas Eve, 1980, Morgan was sitting at her desk in their home in Annapolis working on her next novel—*Horse Goddess*—when the telephone rang. It was Ronald Reagan calling from his home in California.

"I am about three-fourths the way through your book (*Lion of Ireland*). I just called to tell you that you write beautifully, and I am a great fan of yours."

Horrible thoughts flashed across Morgan's mind. "I am not going to say something stupid. This is the President of the United States!"

The voice on the other end of the phone continued. "I want you to know the transition process (President Reagan had not yet been inaugurated) is going very slowly because I have been sneaking away every moment I can get to read your book."

"Mr. President," Morgan began, and then she thought, (No, that is not right; he has been elected but not inaugurated.) "Mr. President Elect—no, that is not right either. What do I call you?"

There was the sound of laughter on the other end of the phone. "Well, Nancy calls me Ron."

So I managed to carry on a conversation with the incoming President without really calling him anything at all. If you think that is easy, you try it some time!

"We talked about fifteen minutes about history and about the importance of history. I was impressed by his grasp of history."

"You have to work from a position of strength," said the President.

"In studying Brian Boru's military strategy, he saw how effectively it had worked for him (Boru)," explains Morgan.

It was also while Morgan was work-



ing on *The Horse Goddess* that she and Charlie began to think about moving to the hills of New Hampshire.

"By then we really had started making money from the two books—enough so that we could live where we wanted to, and Maryland was too hot."

They first discovered the beauty of the White Mountains soon after Morgan had finished *Lion of Ireland*, and they were in complete accord that they had found the ideal place where Morgan could write, keep her house, and the family could enjoy a variety of outdoor activities.

Morgan was too involved with *The Horse Goddess* to accompany Charlie on his trek to New Hampshire to search for a suitable house—large enough for the Llywelyns, Charlie's mother and grandmother, and Morgan's parents (who were back together again). So off Charlie went with a checkbook and the family beagle. As luck would have it, he located the perfect house with a few acres of land in Kearsage.

In Maryland, the extended family loaded all their belongings, including Morgan's beloved horse Atticus, into three U-hauls and three cars and were New Hampshire bound.

"We brought the last great wagon train north," laughs Morgan, "and nobody but Charlie and the beagle had seen the house."

With the expert help of Charlie's brother, a skilled craftsman in Maryland, the house (named *Ceann Cora*) was quickly renovated and made livable. One large room was set aside upstairs next to the master bedroom for Morgan's study. Here she spends as many as fourteen hours a day—week in and week out—writing and researching in an atmosphere that would be the envy of almost any writer. Her books, charts, maps, and manuscripts are kept in impeccable order, for both Charlie and Morgan are people whose daily lives are systematic and orderly. From her desk she can look across a small orchard at the trees that ascend the dark hills and the distant mountain. Her love for trees may be innate also, for she is a true and proud descendant of the ancient Celts and the druids who loved and nurtured every tree.

No one knew better the inner secrets of the cycle of life and the essence of man living in harmony with nature than the ancient Celts, and this theme permeates every novel that Morgan writes. Consequently, there are few places in this world better suited than Kearsage for one such as she, who is so sensitive to nature. Each day she can observe the cycle of life slowly revolving while her creative mind is at work turning out a new masterpiece like *Bard* (scheduled to be published by Houghton-Mifflin in November), and the novel she is currently working on with immense enthusiasm called *Grace O'Malley*.

She is never completely alone in her study, for a fourteen-year-old robin—raised from a fledgling—sits in its cage near her desk and observes her progress. And then, of course, Charlie is seldom far away. He brings her meals to her and looks in upon her periodically. There is no telephone near the study to begin ringing suddenly—penetrating the silence of her solitude and abruptly interrupting her trend of thought. When the downstairs phone rings, it is always Charlie who answers. His training and experience in sales and management are now directed toward managing all of Morgan's affairs. Among an imposing number of talents, Charlie is an expert photographer and does all of the portraits of Morgan that appear on the jackets of her novels (and the one on page 5 of this issue).

"I could not live a day without Charlie," Morgan declares emphatically.

No one has ever regretted the move to New Hampshire. Sean, after graduating from Johns Hopkins University, is in his second year of law school at Duquesne, but he comes for visits as often as possible and enjoys skiing with his father. And despite a demanding daily schedule, Morgan takes time to do things with her husband and son.

The couple are looking forward especially to this summer when they will spend two or three months in Ireland. The movie rights to *Lion of Ireland* were sold over two years ago, and after much preparation and selective casting, the shooting of the film is scheduled to commence in the land of the legendary Brian Boru. Morgan will be acting as

Script Consultant. Both are excited about the prospects of a really great movie being made from what has proved to be a very successful novel. She has serious reservations, however.

"I can think of only one or two movies that I thought were better than the books. People who read have to work at their imaginations. You have to create the faces, the voices—(pointing to her head) you create so much up here."

Life is obviously very good to the Llywelyns. Morgan is riding a crest of literary successes and seems destined to become one of the truly great historical novelists of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. She stands alone as a writer of Celtic fiction. Devastating as it seemed that day in 1975 when she failed by such a narrow margin to win a coveted spot on the U.S. Olympic Equestrian Team, she can now honestly say that it happened for the best—for, as she says, "I love writing more than I ever loved competing."

*The photos on pages 6 & 7 were taken by Jack Barnes, a regular contributor*



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... Ruth Glazer

ward, she was told that the dog had an unpleasant disposition and liked to bite!

Catering a birthday party to honor Brahms for the Portland Chamber Music Society was another unforgettable experience for the ladies. The venture was undertaken as a fund-raiser for the S.R.F.A. The ladies of the Board provided a feast which included an exotic Indian curried chicken salad and a four-tiered birthday cake which was cut by Robert J. Lurtsema, of National Public Radio fame. The meal was elegantly served on china, linen and flower-bedecked tables by waitresses dressed in period costumes.

Scrumptious food is in itself a memorable part of the S.R.F.A. concerts. Ruth prepares an amazing assortment of delicacies to serve at the receptions which she and Frank frequently hold at their home after the concerts.

"She is a gourmet cook, and thinks that the rest of us are, too," one Board member commented. Those who have sampled the cooking at coffee talks, "Sentimental Journeys" or dessert concerts would have to agree with Ruth.



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The next goal of the Saco River Festival Association may be to acquire a building for their concerts which could also serve as a community arts center, according to Patricia Tewksbury.

"We badly need some place where activities such as a film series or community theater events can take place, as well as a site for our concerts," she explains. Chances are, if this becomes their goal, it will be accomplished by the organization with Ruth as catalyst. She is dynamic and determined, devoted to music and the Arts and has the organizational skills to make that dream come true.

This season's series represents a departure from the past. In addition to the chamber music programs, there are folk music concerts, a family vaudeville show and several special events. This ambitious series results from the response to a David Mallet concert which was included as a special event in last summer's series.

"That concert made us aware of a whole new audience, interested in a different type of music," Patricia observes. The concert was a sell-out; many people were turned away.

Tickets for all concerts are the same price, thus concert-goers can put together their own series package. They may choose the chamber music series, the popular series, select some from each group—or go to them all!

Coffee talks again precede many concerts. For tickets or information phone Dorothy Locke, 625-4667, or write the Saco River Festival Association, Kezar Falls, Maine 04047.

Ruth believes that every concert at the Cornish Elementary School has been special. Soft pine rafters curve overhead and musicians perform against a backdrop of tall pine treetops as the sun sets outside the arched windows. A cricket, apparently as delighted as the audience and entirely uninhibited, sings his accompaniment. It is certain that Southern Maine music lovers will be blessed again this summer as the Saco River Festival Association once more treats them to a true festival of joyful music, delicious food and camaraderie. The spirit to enjoy music will fill the river valley!



## Poems

### THE OLD PINE BOUGHS

The old pine boughs  
hang from the doorway  
dry, still,  
as if holding their breath!

### FOGGY MORNING

Today as the fog drifts  
like hands  
through a spider's web  
we touch, and fall  
abandoning ourselves  
to the thick clouds  
of you and me  
and, "what is it?"  
We are flying  
like pillows  
thrown by happy children.

In the evening  
moist pebbles  
rattle underneath cold brook.  
The bright stars sparkle, glow, hang  
like candles in a distant room.  
Five blackbirds fly silently  
past the grey barn  
silhouetting the moon.  
An old man inside the farmhouse  
tips his coffee pot over one last time,  
lights his pipe  
and leans back into his rocker  
pulling on his left suspender  
his right palm resting comfortably  
over his heart.

### TRANSLATION

These lines of poetry come  
like the grain lines in red cedar  
circling out from the heart of the tree  
they stop at the thick and heavy bark.  
They are only seen when the tree is cut,  
but they are felt.  
The many birds that rest upon their  
sturdy limbs hear them;  
sometimes their songs are nothing more  
than the poems of the tree  
in their own language.

Russell Mariani  
No. Conway, N.H.



# MOLLY'S TOOTH

*A Short Story Just For Children*

*by Nancy Chadbourne*



Molly sat in the warm sand and watched her mother build a castle with her brother Brad. Her tongue pumped at the loose tooth in her lower jaw.

"We need your help, Mol," her mother called, flicking some sand in Molly's direction.

"No. My tooth might fall out in the sand and get lost." She lay back on her towel and stared at pine trees that seemed to stand on their heads. She jiggled her tooth and then sat up abruptly, afraid she might swallow it. She squinted against the sun's reflection off the lake and tried to count the sailboats. Her tongue pushed and pulled as she counted—six.

"Race you to the float, Mol," said Brad as he carefully placed a twig in the tallest turret of the castle. His spikey brown hair poked out the holes of his tattered baseball cap. He suddenly raised the castle's drawbridge, tossed the cap on the sand and ran toward the water.

"Come on, Mol, the dragon is coming. We got to get across the moat."

"No! My tooth might —"

"Who cares about your stupid tooth." Brad ran into the water making dragon-sized splashes.

Molly stomped off toward the woods. She followed the path through the blueberry bushes to the back side of the giant split rock. She climbed up by placing her feet in the cracks and settled on the rough edge above the water. Maybe now they'd leave her alone. She checked her tooth, her very first loose tooth. Brad, tall, skinny, big brother Brad, had lost six already. She watched him making faces at his imaginary dragon as he stood on one end of the float trying to see how far he could tip it out of the water.

"Molly, what's the matter?" Her mother was on the rock beside her, slipping her arm around Molly's shoulder. Molly bit her lip.

"Brad says I'm stupid to believe in the tooth fairy and what does she do with



old dead teeth anyway?" Frowning, Molly stuck out her chin and tossed a pebble into the lake. Once more her tongue worked at the loose tooth. She could slide her tongue under the back edge of the tooth and feel the little hole in her gum. Her tongue jabbed harder as she thought of Brad. He thought he knew everything. She heard a muffled crunch as her tongue shot through a gap in her teeth. She tasted warm, bitter blood. Her tooth was out.

"Ma!" Molly grabbed her mother's arm and pointed frantically to her mouth. She kept her lips pressed together so tightly they tingled. Her hand trembled as she slowly pulled out her lip and reached for the tooth. She held the tooth firmly in two fingers and gasped for breath. Blood. And no Band-aid in sight. She was sure she would die before the tooth fairy even came.

"Congratulations, Mol! That's a fine looking tooth."

Molly moved her mouth but no words came out.

Her mother pressed a wad of tissue in the hole in Molly's mouth. "The tooth fairy won't have to polish this one before she puts it in the sky."

"Whah?" Molly looked questioningly out from under her too long bangs. Her ears were humming. She hoped the tissue would stop the bleeding as well as a Band-aid.

"Didn't I tell you why the tooth fairy collects teeth?" Her mother pushed Molly's bangs out of her eyes.

"One night last summer we took blankets up to the field and watched the falling stars, remember?"

Molly shivered as she removed the crumpled tissue from her mouth.

"Sure." She examined her tiny white treasure. "What's that got to do with my tooth?" She was practicing grinning so that her lower teeth and gap showed. She had to stretch her lips way back to make it work.

"Every star that fell that night was all burned up—gone. It's the tooth fairy's job to make new stars. So she collects all the children's teeth and polishes them and puts them in the sky."

"Really, Ma?" Molly wrinkled her nose and held her tooth up to the sun. "It does sparkle a little." Molly buffed the tooth on her bathing suit, then licked it to make it shinier.

"Brad, come see my tooth."

He was fighting the invisible dragon on the float. He made a last lunge with his tanned arm, then dove toward the split rock. He swam quietly under water barely rippling the surface of the lake. He came up with a snort, scaled the rock with ease and stood dripping over Molly.

"Let's see."

Molly held up the tooth in one hand and pulled her bottom lip down with the other, exposing the soggy hole.

"Yup. Now you're rid of that, let's go." He slowly pulled an invisible sword from its case and examined the sharpness of its edge with his thumb.

"Do you think it will make a good star, Brad?" Molly asked as she wrapped the tooth in an extra tissue her mother had given her.

"Aw, that's garbage. I got to get this



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... Molly's Tooth

dragon." Brad sheathed his sword and dove from the rock.

"It is not!" screamed Molly as she waved a tight fist at her submerged brother. She scowled at her mother and slid down the back of the rock.

"Don't follow me, Ma," she muttered as she headed for the swing. It hung from a plank nailed to two tall pines at the top of a rise. Molly gently placed her packaged tooth on a clump of spongy moss. Then she grabbed the rough ropes of the swing, backed up as far as she could, gave a jump and pulled. She strained to get going. She kicked her legs up to the pine tops and threw her head back. The ground dropped from under her and the grove was a green blur. Her arms ached, but she pulled and kicked and fought back the tears. The wind blew her bangs into and then out of her eyes. She could hear Brad fighting his dragon.

"Mol, help me! This dragon is killing me," he shouted.

Molly heard him and pumped harder, then stopped pulling in mid-stride. She had an idea. She jumped from the swing onto the moss, grabbed the tooth and skittered down the hill back to the lake.

Brad was writhing on the beach, fading fast.

"Help, help." His voice was weak.

Molly took her tooth from the tissue, licked it and held it up to the sun.

"The light from my star-tooth is blinding the dragon, Brad. Get him while he can't see."

Brad weakly held up his sword, took aim and plunged at his dragon. He fell giggling face first into the sand.

"You saved me with that ole tooth, Mol," said Brad as he headed into the lake to rinse off.

"Yeah." Molly smiled and straightened herself up.

"Let's go put it under your pillow now before it gets lost," said Brad.

"Yeah, let's," said Molly. She grabbed Brad's hand as she ran from the beach.

... Readers' Room/Old Tents

During the outing we slowly unravelled the mystery of the overstuffed car. There were seven air mattresses for three people. Stating that nothing should go to waste (and avoiding possible back injury) we used them all. Of course it mattered not that we were the only people in the area who stood on coolers to get into bed every night.

We had enough ice to cover the polar region. In the corner stood a full box of canned goods and no one had brought a can opener.

One night we experienced a thunderstorm. I reminded Mother that we were in the midst of pine trees which were considered dangerous. She drew her five feet up to a full five-feet-two and reminded me, in turn, that no one would construct a camping area in a potentially dangerous area. She did not explain the two pine branches lying across our fireplace the next morning.

My cousin slept with her head out of the tent each night because of claustrophobia and contracted an eye infection from people kicking sand in her face while en route to the bathroom.

There were no real casualties. Mother did all the supervising and cooking. We made it through three days and trekked home with the car as packed as it was on the maiden voyage. I had sand in my hair, shoes, between my toes, and under my fingernails for a week, but I was alive. That was what counted.

I try to avoid Mother during the winter months. Her imagination comes alive over a cup of coffee at her kitchen table and one slip of my tongue could find me in Fairbanks, Alaska on the Fourth of July. I often wonder what ever happened to that old faded green giant tent that we proved we could erect. I guess most drab tents have been replaced by circus-colored canvases and motorized camping. I suppose it's sad . . . in a way . . . but if I get too nostalgic, Mother will hunt up an Army-Navy surplus store. Maybe that's where old tents go.

*Sandra Morgan*

*South Glens Falls, New York*

*East Waterford*

... An Island Childhood  
that piazza in the summer and watch  
the boats with the spyglass. Not too  
many people stopped at Perkins Island.

"There were two big hotels down at  
Popham right on the front beach, on the  
river side. That house there in the pic-  
ture is where I was born. My uncle  
owned the store. Marr used to be post-  
master, Marr did, and the postoffice was  
in the store. We knew the people who  
kept the Pond Island light, too. Popham  
was a boom town then. Some of those  
people came to visit Perkins Island but  
not too much. People down at Popham  
did some lobstering but over at Parker  
Head it was all clamming, they were  
mostly clam people. Right down at the  
end of Perkins is a great place for clams.  
There was plenty of big sailboats around  
then. There were sidewheelers. The big  
event of the day was at the wharf, the  
boat landing. People used to flock to the  
boat landing. You see there were no  
automobiles and the road wasn't too  
good from Popham to Bath so every-  
thing went by water. Different than it is  
today.

"I appreciate it very much to talk;  
very few people are interested in past  
history. My time doesn't amount to any-  
thing. So many of the lighthouses along  
the coast just deteriorated and it's too  
bad because a lot of them were in good  
shape. The government put in a lot of  
work, they are well-made buildings. The  
government supplied a lot, later they  
got furnaces in the houses, they got  
refrigerators, all kind of things like that  
we never had. A lot of people now think  
they can't get along without all those  
things. Well, you can if you want." \*

*Dr. Garrett Clough is an ecological  
consultant.*





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# Notes From Brookfield Farm

by Jack Barnes

A steady August rain is like nectar sent by the gods. Usually there are showers enough to keep the gardens sufficiently moist, but invariably several weeks in early July and August pass without a prolonged rain—the kind that is necessary to prevent the water table from dropping to the point where I must monitor daily the water level in our old well by the house. All too frequently there comes a day when the pump continues to run, which is an ominous signal that we have consumed too much water. My suspicion is usually confirmed once I remove the rustic wooden cover and peer far down to spot the strainer inches above the water line.

My elderly neighbor shakes his saged head, takes a puff from his pipe and mutters, "I don't know why your well goes dry nowadays. Gorrry sakes, I 'member when old Fred Stanton ustah live he'ah, and he wate'd all his Durham cattle from this well. Gawda'mighty, his well nevah went dry then. Sump'ens gone wrong."

Of course, he did not have a flush toilet, shower, automatic washer and a few other water-consuming devices that we have come to accept as modern conveniences.

Anyway, as I struggle to harvest my second crop of hay between thunder showers, I allow too many days to elapse before checking the well. Inevitably some day in late August or early September my wife greets me as I come into the kitchen with vegetables to wash in the sink with "I think we're out of water."

"Drat! I should have checked the well."

"You mean you haven't been?" Diana admonishes with a note of marked exasperation.

"Well, I checked it a week ago (more likely two weeks have elapsed, since I lose track of time in the summer) and we seemed to have plenty. I guess I let those showers lull me into a state of euphoria."

"It's happened every summer, it seems, since we bought the place. When are you going to learn?"

The most embarrassing thing is that the crisis usually occurs when we have company, which is usually the explanation for the sudden increase in the consumption of water. The summer after Diana and I were married and moved up to the house from our mobile home, we took an extended trip to Africa. While we were gone, my mother, sister, and her husband came from Oregon to spend the summer. Now my mother and sister had had plenty of experience with wells going dry when they lived in a farmhouse at North Sebago. I had warned them about our well and felt confident that their years of experience with Maine dry spells would remind them to use water conservatively, especially in August.

"Have we had any rain lately?" is the first or second question I always ask whoever meets us at the Portland Jetport. That summer there had been several rainy days before we arrived, and my fears were allayed. When I saw how lush the garden looked (including weeds), I got about the business of farming; my wife went immediately to bed to recover from jet lag; and my relatives continued on with the daily routine they had established for themselves while we were away, which included my eighty-year-old mother assiduously and religiously dusting every "objet de art" in the house daily—an Herculean task for anyone but my mother.

Two days after our return, Diana, still staggering around with a chronic case of jet lag greeted me as I came through the door with a bucket of tomatoes and an armful of corn with a look of utter despair that could mean only one thing.

"We can't be!" I exclaimed in utter disbelief, and my golden morning vanished as if it were blotted out by an eclipse.

"O yes, we can be!" Diana retorted. "Your sister did three loads of washing!"

At that moment I felt a terrible urge to be back in Kenya with the Masai; but, no, I had to face bitter reality and go down cellar and unplug the pump before it died of utter exhaustion. At this point both of us were thankful for our backgrounds in Asian philosophy that enabled us to face such a dilemma with some vague resemblance to what is referred to as "Asian calm." We could only wait until sufficient water flowed back into the well to once again be able to prime the pump. In the meantime, the toilet needed to be periodically flushed, dishes washed, and at least hands and faces dabbled in water. Then, of course, the sheep and poultry had to have water.

It is times like this, when I gather up buckets and containers and head down to our mobile home by the brook to draw water from the outside faucet or from the brook itself, that I find myself thinking of Robert Frost's lovely poem "Going for Water." Somehow as I silently recite the lines of his poem, I find that having to carry water up the hill to the house is less frustrating. Robert Frost, I thank you almost annually.

Yesterday afternoon on the eleventh of August, it began to rain. At first it was a soft, quiet rain that seemed to drift down from the mist enshrouding our dark hills. I hurried to finish the chores and pick vegetables for the evening meal and enough ingredients for a salad big enough to last us several days. Before I had picked the corn, however,

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